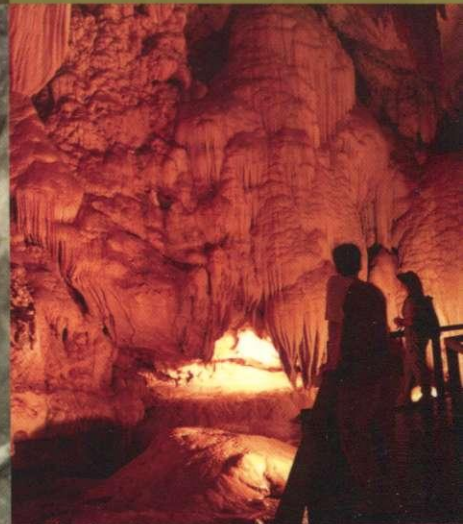


ADVENTURES WITH NATURE

Visit
Malaysia
Celebrating 50 Years of Nationhood

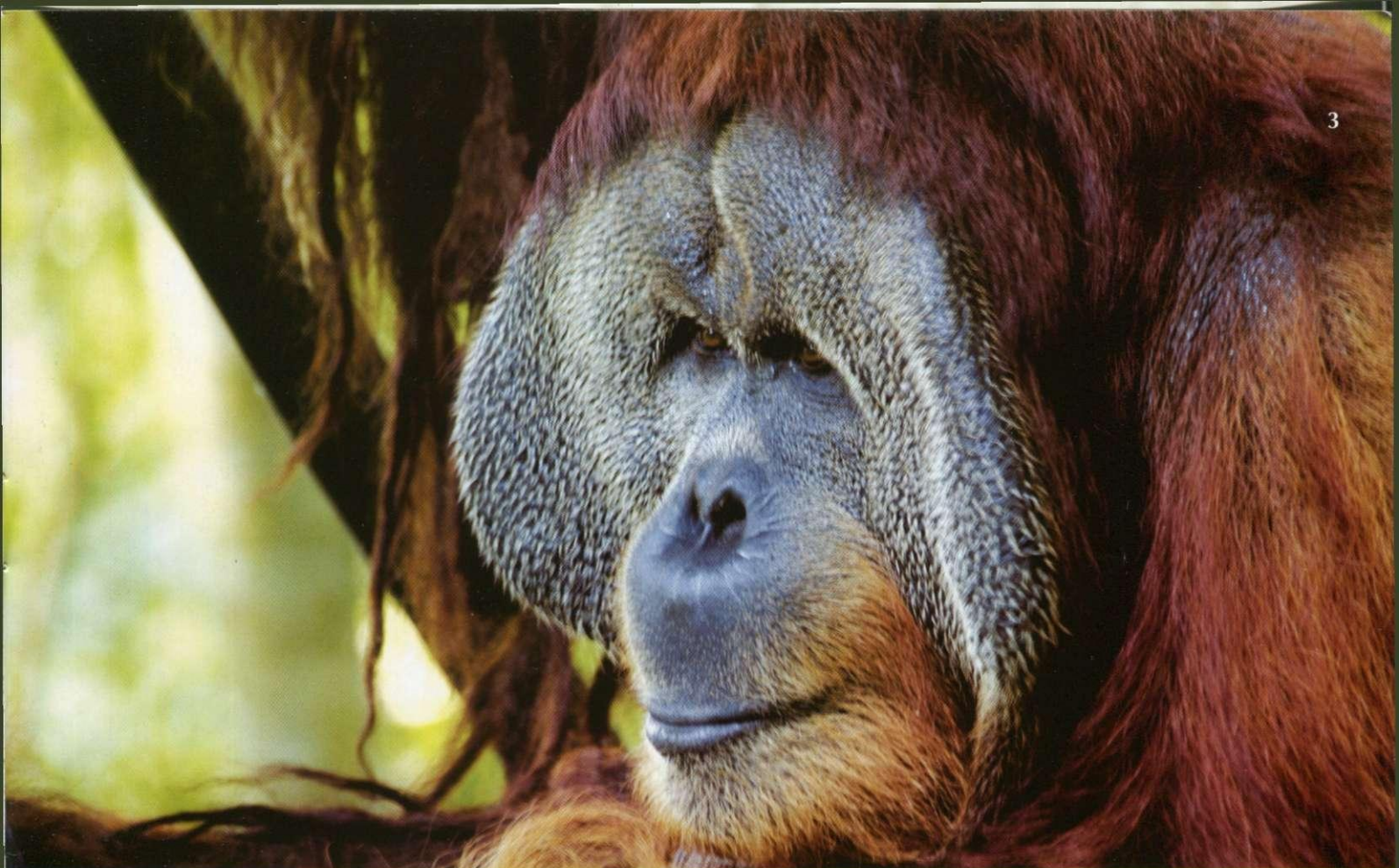
Malaysia
Truly Asia



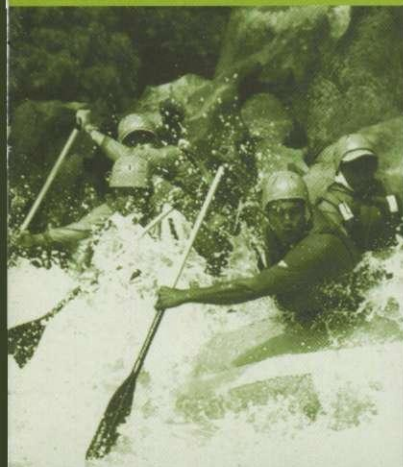
Contents

Map of Malaysia	4-5
Introduction	6-8
Jungle Discoveries / Camping	9-14
Mountain Climbing	15-18
Rock Climbing	19-22
Cave Exploration	23-28
River Cruising	29-32





White Water Rafting	33-36
Four Wheel Drive Expeditions	37-40
Mountain Biking	41-44
Bird Watching	45-48
Wreck Diving	49
Malaysia at a Glance	50
Tourism Malaysia Overseas Offices	51





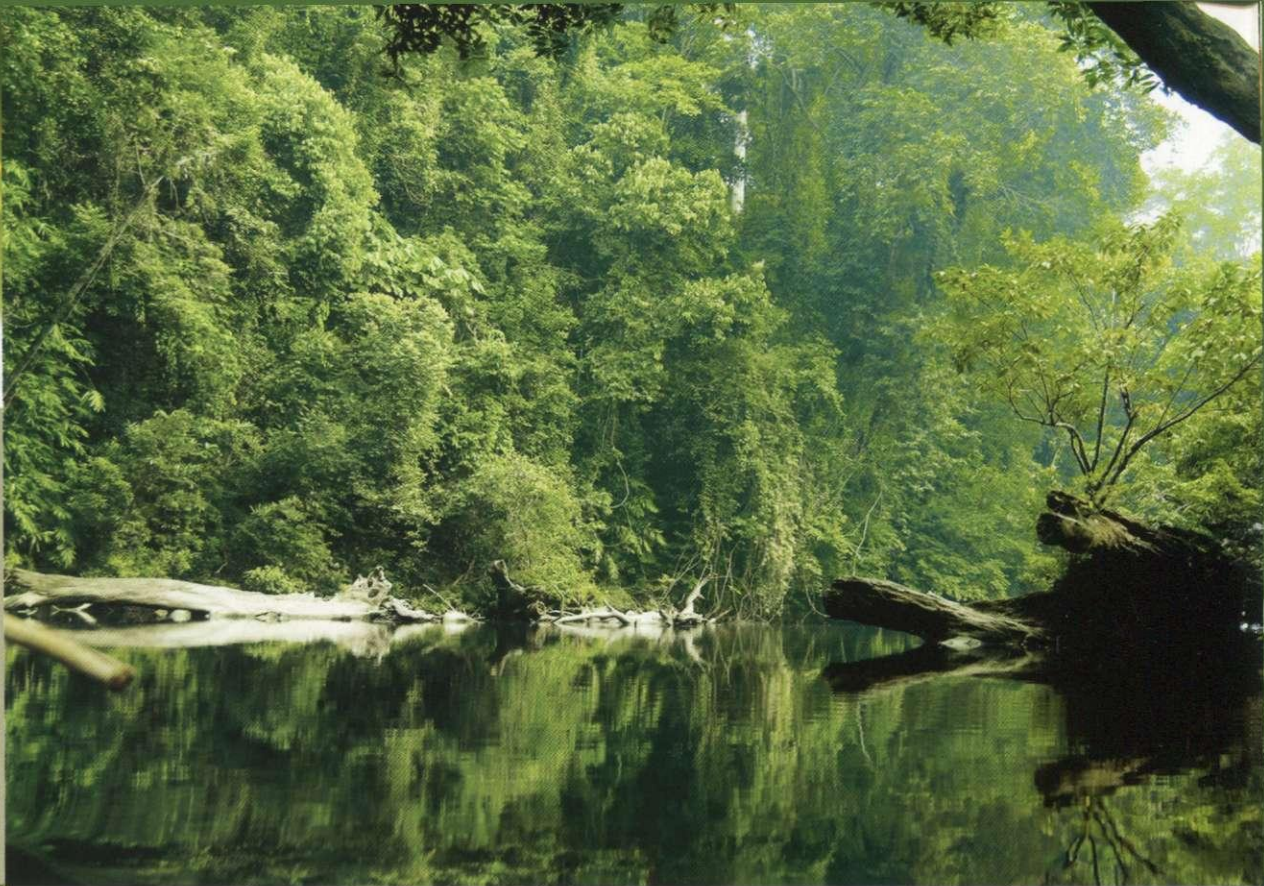
MALAYSIA



LEGEND



(Map is not drawn to scale)

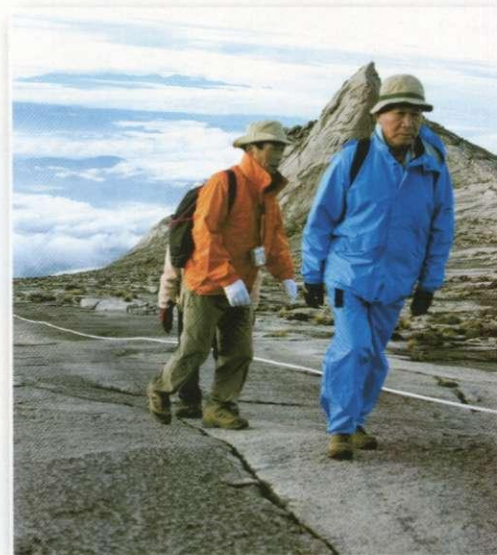


Adventure and Nature Lovers' Paradise

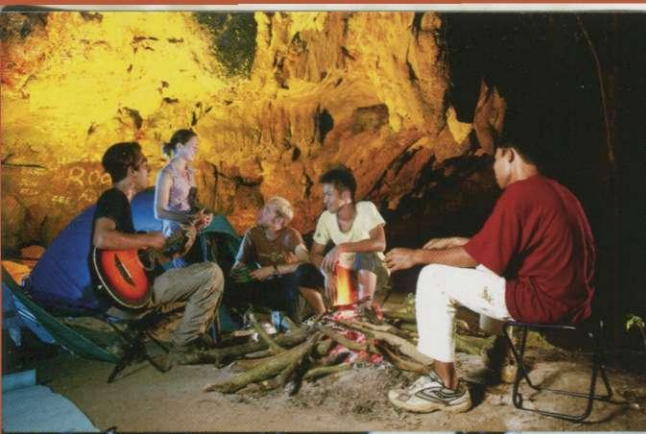
Since ancient times, adventurers and explorers have come to Malaysian shores, attracted by its diverse natural wealth and embraced by its gentle people.

Today Malaysia is known around the world as a destination for a host of nature-based activities and eco-tourism. Be it from challenging rock-climbing or cross-jungle trekking at different mountain zones to wild rafting in frothing rivers, or diving in calm seas to parasailing in the multi-hued skies - it's all here.

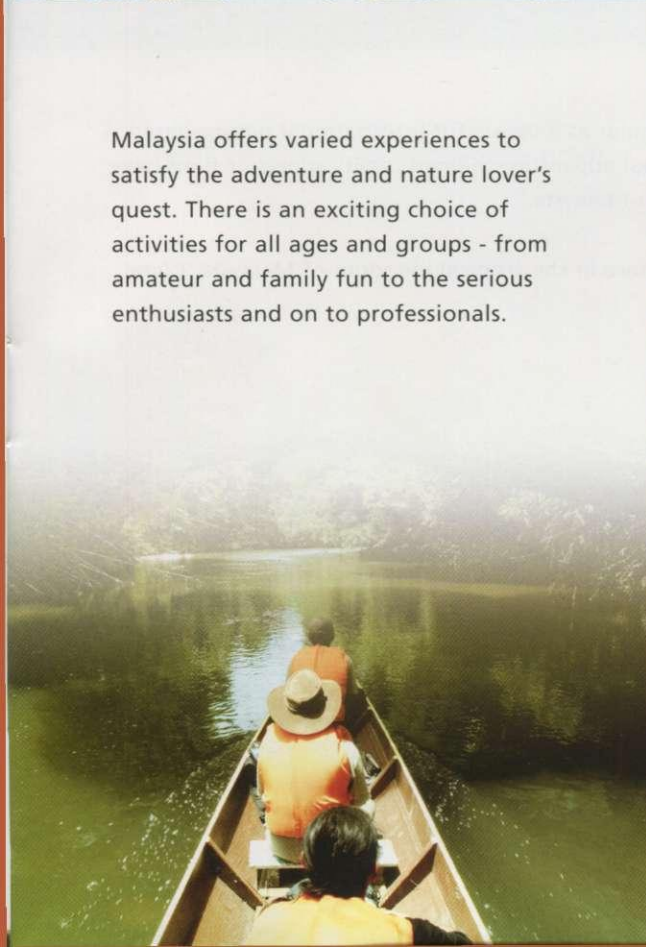
More than half of Malaysia's 329,758 sq km. surface is covered by tropical rainforests that host a bewildering array of exotic and protected plants and animals. There are treasures such as rare species of flora and fauna found only at Mount Kinabalu or wondrous geological

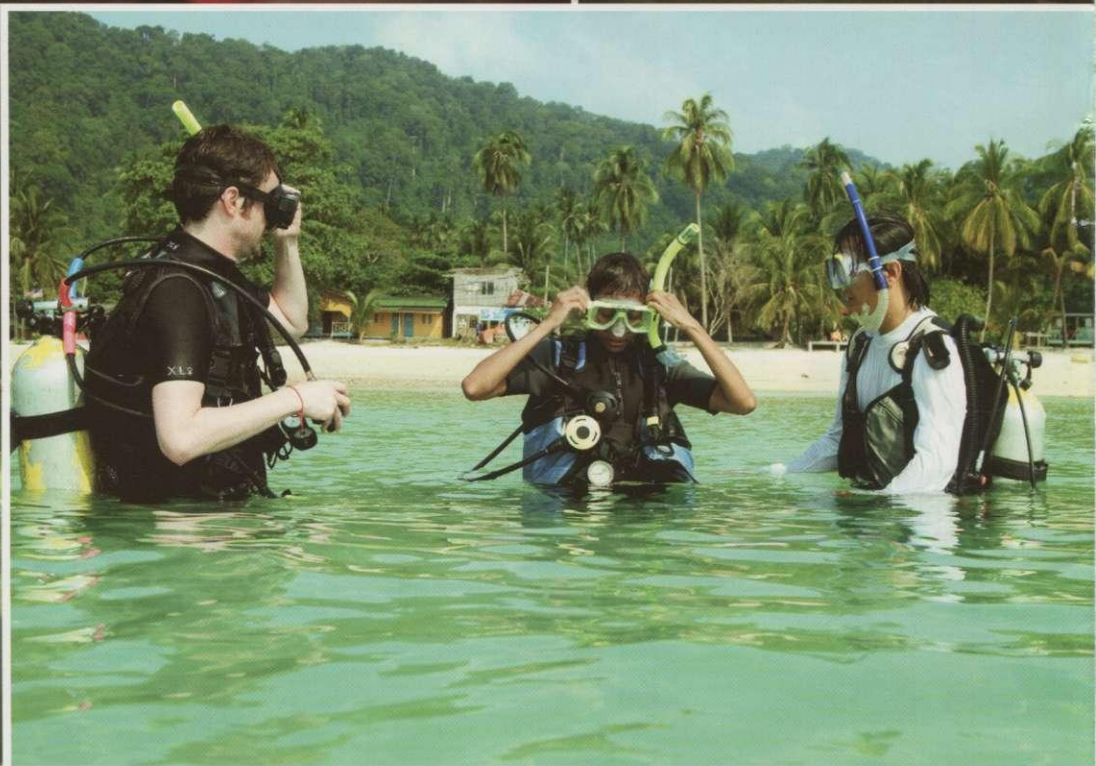


formations such as Mulu Caves. Even the world's oldest forest, estimated at 130 million years old at Taman Negara, Malaysia's premier national park, can be found here.



Malaysia offers varied experiences to satisfy the adventure and nature lover's quest. There is an exciting choice of activities for all ages and groups - from amateur and family fun to the serious enthusiasts and on to professionals.





The country is increasingly popular as a venue for international nature-based competitions. Even international adventure-themed reality shows or films have found their perfect locations in Malaysia.

Adventure and nature are all here in the tropical kingdom of Malaysia. Come and enjoy it to the fullest.





Jungle Trekking



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JUNGLE DISCOVERIES

With its glorious vistas, verdant undulating terrain and varied tropical landscapes, Malaysia's ancient forests offer vast possibilities for trekking and camping. The country's extensive array of national parks and wildlife reserves are ideal for communing with nature and discovering her secrets.

From the primordial rainforest of Taman Negara to the wildlife sanctuaries at Danum Valley and the Kinabatangan floodplains, some of Asia's best-preserved environments offer nature lovers a wealth of experience.

While amateurs may try Malaysia's many easily accessible recreational forests near urban centres, seasoned explorers can go for challenging week-long treks up mountains such as Gunung Tahan, the tallest peak in Peninsular Malaysia.

For the uninitiated, having a trained local guide is necessary to ensure safety and to learn about the amazing and precious diversity of flora and fauna in the ecosystem. Tropical jungles are dense, and the thick vegetation provides camouflage for the jungle denizens. It takes patience and a trained eye to see them.

DIVERSITY OF ENVIRONMENT

Swampy mangroves, extensive river floodplains, dipterocarp rainforests and montane hillsides are among the varied environments that can exist even within trekking distance of each other. Each possess its own ecosystem and wildlife characteristics.



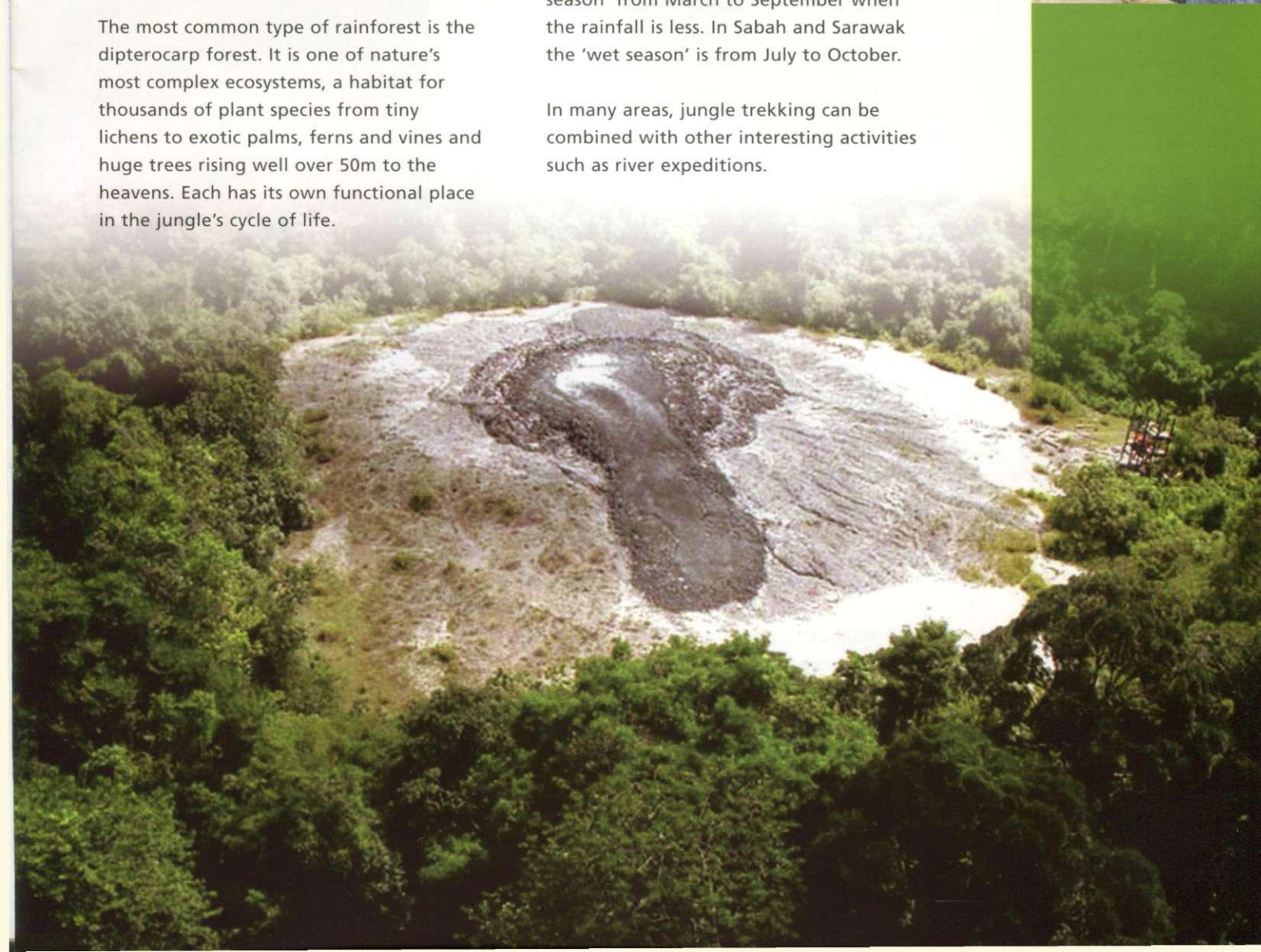
The tidal mangrove forests act as vital buffers against coastal erosion and as protective breeding and nursery zones for numerous fish and aquatic species. There are mangrove belts along most of Peninsular Malaysia's west coast as well as in Sabah and Sarawak. Some such as in Kuala Selangor Nature Park have boardwalks for safety and convenience of visitors.

The most common type of rainforest is the dipterocarp forest. It is one of nature's most complex ecosystems, a habitat for thousands of plant species from tiny lichens to exotic palms, ferns and vines and huge trees rising well over 50m to the heavens. Each has its own functional place in the jungle's cycle of life.

Further up the hills and mountain slopes, montane forest environments take over with their cooler ambience and presenting spectacular views that are well worth the trek.

Jungle trekking can take an hour or more and, with camping, as many days as desired. Among the best periods to go trekking in Peninsula Malaysia is in the 'dry season' from March to September when the rainfall is less. In Sabah and Sarawak the 'wet season' is from July to October.

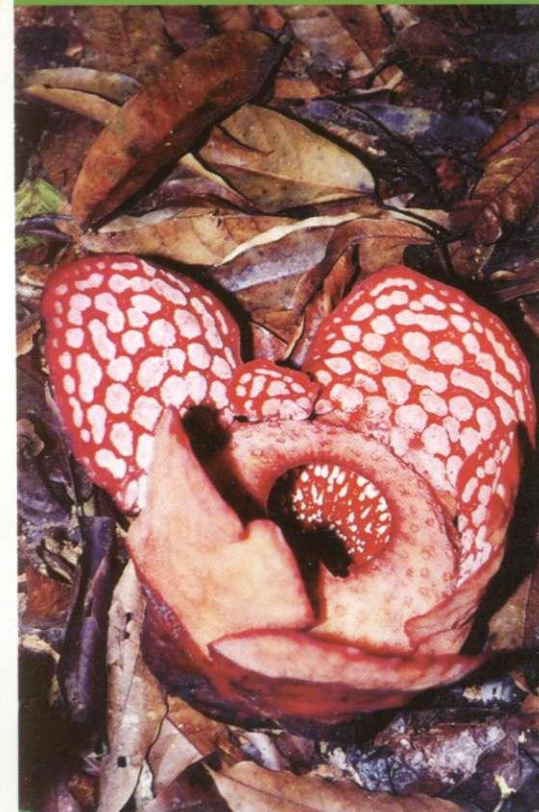
In many areas, jungle trekking can be combined with other interesting activities such as river expeditions.





SITES FOR NATURE AND JUNGLE ADVENTURES

• Kuala Selangor Nature Park	Selangor	Mangrove forest
• Templer Park	Selangor	Mountain forest
• Ulu Bendol	Negeri Sembilan	Mountain forest
• Endau Rompin	Johor	Lowland rainforest
• Gunung Ledang	Johor	Highland rainforest
• Cameron Highlands	Pahang	Highland and mountain rainforest
• Taman Negara	Pahang	Lowland and hill rainforest
• Tasik Chini	Pahang	Freshwater swamp forest
• Tasik Bera	Pahang	Freshwater swamp forest
• Genting Highlands	Pahang	Highland rainforest
• Fraser's Hill	Pahang	Highland rainforest
• Tasik Kenyir	Terengganu	Freshwater swamp forest
• Danum Valley	Sabah	Highland and mountain forest
• Kinabalu Park	Sabah	Highland and mountain forest
• Kinabatangan Floodplain	Sabah	Freshwater swamp forest
• Gunung Emas	Sabah	Highland rainforest
• Bako National Park	Sarawak	Mangrove and mixed forest
• Lambir National Park	Sarawak	Lowland rainforest
• Mulu National Park	Sarawak	Hill rainforest and limestone pinnacles
• Niah National Park	Sarawak	Lowland rainforest



TREASURES AND SENSES OF THE JUNGLE

Malaysia's primeval and unexplored rainforests offer intrepid trekkers great opportunities to observe tropical flora and fauna. The wilds of Malaysia overflow with fantastic plant and animal diversity that fulfill the competitive conditions of the ecosystem. Many species are exotic, rare or even endemic to the particular region and are protected. Endau-Rompin in Johor is a rare milieu of

lowland and mountain forests which is home to the largest population of endangered animals in the country. The Sumatran rhinoceros, tigers and elephants are among the protected species in Endau-Rompin.

Generally most rainforest animals are shy or camouflage themselves to avoid predators or to hunt. *Bumbun* or tower hides and canopy walks, such as at Taman Negara, aid those searching to spot the inhabitants.





JUNGLE ADVENTURE TIPS

- Find out about the trail and surroundings, be sure that you have enough time to complete the entire route before darkness falls. Do not stray off the path to chase after animals.
- Use good judgment regarding the fitness level required for the trek, and know your physical limits.
- Always inform the park officials or let someone know of your plans and destination for the day, especially if going alone.
- Take plenty of water and pack a few easy to eat snacks to keep energy level up. Unless trekking with a local guide, it is not advisable to eat jungle fruit or drink from any water source.
- In the highlands try to trek on the ridge tops to save energy traversing the steep slopes and to catch a cool breeze.
- Be as quiet as possible to avoid scaring any wildlife. Getting an early start during the dawn provides the best chance to sight animals seeking food and the warmth of the early morning sun.
- Wear thin, loose, preferably cotton clothing to remain comfortable.
- Cover arms and legs with long trousers and long-sleeved shirts to ward off mosquitoes and to provide protection against thorny plants.
- Wear leech socks or long socks to prevent leeches from finding an entry way.
- Choose sturdy footwear with proper ankle support and good traction.
- Be prepared for sudden rain showers by carrying a poncho that wraps over both body and your carrying pack to keep everything dry.
- A wide brimmed hat helps to shade a trekker from the heat of the tropical sun.

Take the time to spot the many insects and butterflies flitting about in the forests of Peninsula Malaysia. Marvel at the pendulous nose of the proboscis monkeys found at Sukau in Sabah and Bako in Sarawak. Listen to the swooshing wingbeats of colourful hornbills in the vales of Sarawak or the call of gibbons echoing at dawn in Danum Valley in Sabah.

Besides wildlife, the natural terrain features cool rivers to ford across and enchanting waterfalls to splash around amidst the natural surroundings. A visit to the jungle requires the full use of one's senses to discover all the features and creatures of the forest.

Part of the adventure is to discover how they all fit together.

CAMPING

Most National Parks in Malaysia provide jungle camping sites. There are also many mountain and beach sites which are suitable for camping. In picking a camp site, always take note of the weather conditions. The rainy or monsoon season during December to February renders some camp sites along the river trails of Taman Negara inaccessible. Always check with relevant Park authorities first.

The lower altitudes of primary jungles like Taman Negara and Kenong Rimba Park in Pahang; Endau Rompin in Johor; Mulu and Lambir National Parks in Sarawak are humid, so your choice of tents should allow for good ventilation. All-enclosed nylon tents with sewn-in groundsheets are not recommended as they tend to condense air inside. Cotton tents get heavy after absorbing water.

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When camping on high altitude locations such as Gunung Jerai in Kedah; Gunung Korbu in Perak; Gunung Tapis and Gunung Tahan in Pahang, choose a site sheltered from the wind and avoid the higher peaks when thunderstorms occur. A self-contained tent with aluminium poles and stakes is best for mountain camping.

Only a basic set up is needed when camping at the marine parks or beaches in the country, such as Pulau Payar in Kedah; Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan; Pulau Redang, Terengganu; Pulau Tioman and

Cherating in Pahang and Tunku Abdul Rahman Park in Sabah. A hammock or sleeping bag may do very well.

Although most of the national parks and private tourist facilities furnish and rent out camping gear, it may be wiser to bring along basic camping necessities.

Remember to check on restrictions which may apply due to ecological or other reasons. If unsure, contact the park authorities.

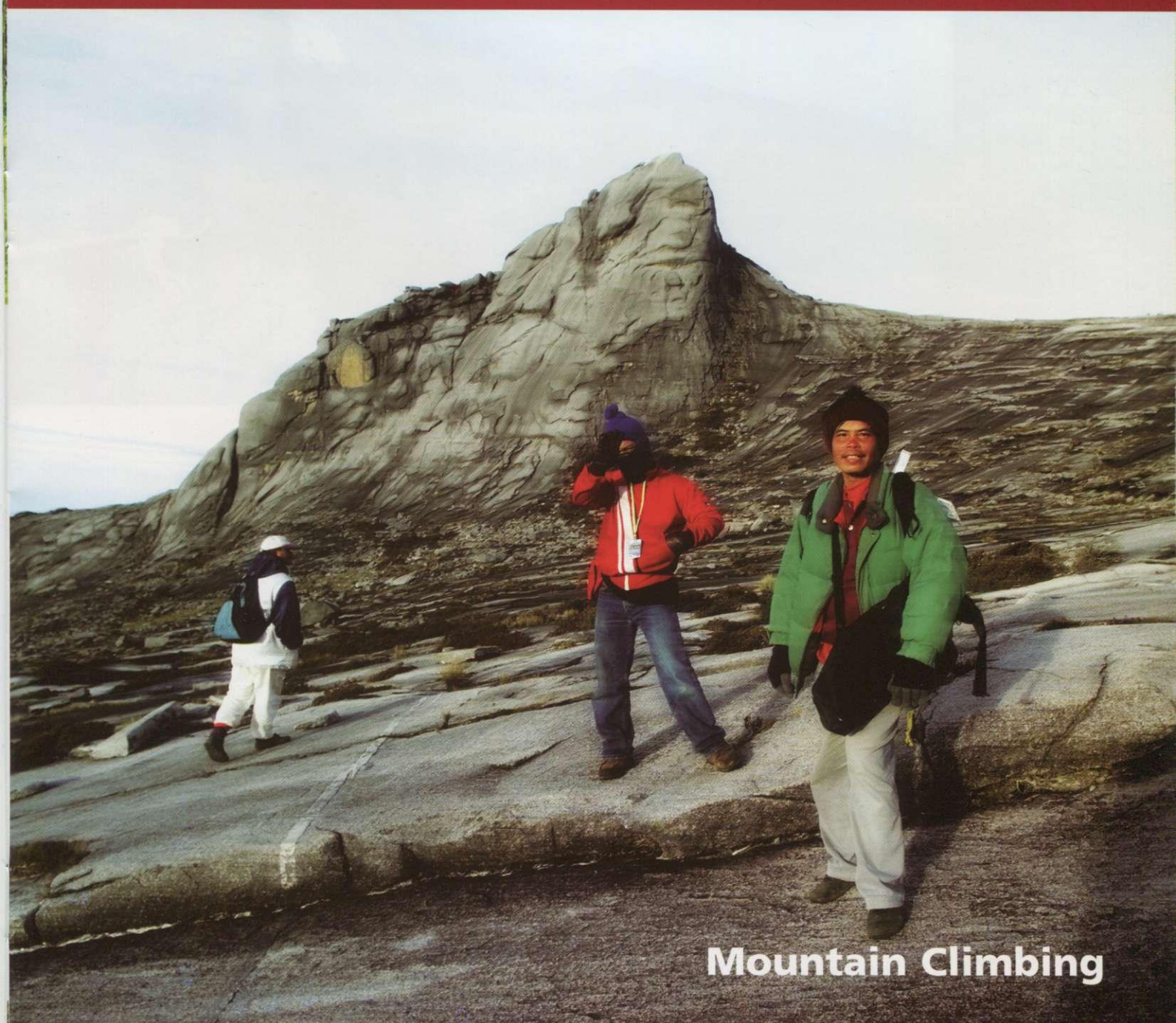
OTHER CAMPING SITES IN MALAYSIA

- Gunung Jerai - Kedah
- Pulau Payar Marine Park - Kedah
- Gunung Korbu Park - Perak
- Port Dickson beaches - Negeri Sembilan
- Mersing Marine Park - Johor
- Redang Marine Park - Terengganu
- Kenong Rimba Park - Pahang
- Gunung Tahan - Pahang
- Gunung Tangga Lima Belas - Pahang
- Tioman Marine Park - Pahang
- Cherating beach - Pahang
- Gunung Tapis - Pahang
- Gunung Alab - Sabah
- Tunku Abdul Rahman Park, Sabah
- National Parks around Kuching area (lowland and hill forests) - Sarawak

CAMPING TIPS

Whether camping in the damp rainforests, on sunny beaches or atop mountain peaks, there are a few easy environmental tips to keep in mind to protect and preserve Malaysia's camp sites.

- Never cut down vegetation in order to make way for a camp site.
- Always choose a clear camping site free of debris and away from rotting trees.
- Nights in the rainforests may get cooler than expected so bring along a waterproof jacket to keep you warm, as well as protection from the rain.
- During rainy periods, do not camp too near a river or at low areas.
- Whenever possible, try to avoid overusing popular camping areas and select an alternative location in order to minimise soil disturbance.
- Bring along reusable plastic cups and plates.
- Rubbish is to be collected and carried away when you leave, not simply buried.



Mountain Climbing

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MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

Climbing up mountains is a wonderful way to discover the diversity and uniqueness of Malaysia's natural landscape, starting from the tropical rainforest in the lowlands to the mountain vegetation in the high elevations. River crossings and gushing waterfalls along the way add to the adventure.

From easier walks in the cool comfort of Peninsular Malaysia's Main Range to the more challenging peaks of Malaysian Borneo, there are mountains to tempt every level of climber. Be it high or low, with each ascent you make, you will be rewarded with awe-inspiring sights and discoveries that will expand your mind.

MOUNTAINS IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA

The Peninsular has a range of scenic accessible heights as well as steep shrouded mountains.

For starters, there are less arduous climbs with well-marked trails at popular sites such as legendary Gunung Ledang in Johor, historic Gunung Jerai in Kedah or Gunung

Angsi in Negeri Sembilan where trips take several hours to a day to complete. These are easily accessible and guides are not compulsory. Gunung Berembun and Gunung Brinchang in the Cameron Highlands offer sweeping views of tea and vegetable plantations and are ideal for those who prefer light trekking. The latter at 2032m is the highest point that can be reached by road in Peninsular Malaysia.

Those who want more than a leisure outing can choose a summit that requires a journey through the wilderness first. Gunung Gagau in Taman Negara is a day's climb, but to reach the base you need to traverse lake, river and jungle and throw in a cave or two along the way before the peak rewards you with a view of three states.

For a bigger challenge, head to Gunung Tahan, the highest point in the Peninsular. The 130km return journey takes up to 8 days and traverses over rainforests, tricky rivers and mountain ridges in the unspoilt heart of Taman Negara. An experienced guide is a must.





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MOUNTAINS IN SABAH & SARAWAK

Some of the world's most unique mountain environments can be found in Malaysian Borneo.

Gunung Kinabalu, one of the highest peaks in Southeast Asia at 4095.2m is located in the World Heritage Site of Kinabalu Park, Sabah. Accessible to all trekkers, the Summit Trail leading to Low's Peak has clear paths and ropes at steep rocky sections. Exotic plant life found only in the area such as the Necklace Orchid can be seen on the climb.

Nearby Gunung Trusmadi is a more adventurous week-long trail through mossy forest, steep hills and rain-swollen rivers. The summit will reward you with one of the best views of Gunung Kinabalu and a chance to see the remarkably large and rare pitcher plants found only on the ridges of Trusmadi.

Most other mountains can be reached in two days as long as you are fit enough to tackle any steep terrain.

In Sarawak, Gunung Santubong is one of the most popular mountains with its spectacular view of Kuching. Guides will be needed on the tough trek to Gunung Penrissen, but the 1329m vertical scramble to the top can be completed in a day or two.

The long uphill trek to the sandstone summit of famed Gunung Mulu takes four days and passes through primary jungle, with swampy patches and huge clumps of colourful rhododendrons before the white clouds disperse to reveal the massive limestone outcropping of Gunung Api just across the valley.





MOUNTAIN CLIMBING TIPS

While many mountains, especially those located in the national parks, have overnight camping facilities and provide some equipment for rental, it is always wise to plan ahead and make enquiries for bookings, weather conditions and other current information. Some remote or protected sites may even require special permits from the authorities.

It is best to hire a guide for the trip, unless the trail is well marked. Besides guiding you to the best campsites and rest spots, local guides know the natural history and folklore of the area and are invaluable when plans change and alternative routes need to be taken.

The exertion of carrying a heavy pack is compounded by the altitude, so it is always best to choose to climb mountains within your ability. Do not overload yourself with camping equipment. As a rough guide, the weight of your pack should not be more than a quarter of your body weight, the lighter the better for longer journeys.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT ADVISORY

- Comfortable long-sleeved shirts and pants for protection from leech bites, abrasions and the elements.
- A hat with a wide brim against intense sunshine and light rain.
- A poncho or rain cape.
- A pair of gloves and a balaclava will help protect you from cold summit winds.
- Wear roomy lightweight jungle boots with good ankle supports and a deep-ridged sole, and wear two pairs of socks to prevent blisters.
- A comfortable rucksack with padded shoulder straps, hip belt and internal frame is a must.
- A map and compass for navigating jungle trails; under some dense jungle canopies the sun might not be clearly seen.
- A whistle is a useful tool for attracting attention and signaling others.
- A basic first aid kit for the treatment of abrasions, insect bites and wounds.
- Extra batteries for your torchlight; candles and matches.

CLIMBING SITES IN MALAYSIA

• Bukit Bendera (Penang Hill)	821m	Penang
• Gunung Jerai	1217m	Kedah
• Gunung Korbu	2183m	Perak
• Gunung Bubu	1568m	Perak
• Gunung Angsi	825m	Negeri Sembilan
• Gunung Ledang	1276m	Johor
• Gunung Belumut	1010m	Johor
• Gunung Tahan	2187m	Taman Negara, Pahang
• Gunung Gagau	1376m	Taman Negara, Pahang
• Gunung Brinchang	2032m	Cameron Highlands, Pahang
• Gunung Berembun	2075m	Cameron Highlands, Pahang
• Gunung Jasar	1696m	Cameron Highlands, Pahang
• Gunung Perdah	1529m	Cameron Highlands, Pahang
• Gunung Stong	1422m	Kelantan
• Gunung Chamah	2171m	Kelantan
• Gunung Silam	883m	Lahad Datu, Sabah
• Gunung Lotong	1667m	Maliau Basin, Sabah
• Gunung Kinabalu	4095.2m	Kinabalu Park, Sabah
• Gunung Tambuyukon	2580m	Kinabalu Park, Sabah
• Gunung Trusmadi	2643m	Sabah
• Tama Abu	2113m	Kelabit Highlands, Sarawak
• Bukit Batu Buli	2082m	Kelabit Highlands, Sarawak
• Bukit Batu Lawi	2046m	Kelabit Highlands, Sarawak
• Bukit Batu	2092m	Sarawak
• Gunung Penrissen	1329m	Sarawak
• Gunung Santubong	810m	Sarawak
• Bukit Batu Iran	2018m	Sarawak
• Gunung Mulu	2376m	Mulu National Park, Sarawak





Rock Climbing



ROCK CLIMBING

Rock climbing enthusiasts will enjoy conquering Malaysia's rock faces and cliffs, of which there are many to choose from around the varied landscape. Limestone outcrops dot many areas of Peninsular Malaysia with limestone crags and sandstone mountains in Sarawak and some big alpine granite walls in Sabah. Other mountainous areas have various rock faces waiting to be discovered.

Rock climbing as a publicly accessible sport is relatively new in Malaysia, although there has been a small local community of aficionados. Thus many potential climbing venues are still to be explored. The same goes for rock climbing's sister sport activity abseiling or rappelling.

ROCK CLIMBING SITES IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia has it all: from smaller limestone hills and crags to mountains with sandstone or granite walls, and with all levels of difficulty. While an increasing number of sites are being discovered and

enjoyed, potentially hundreds more are waiting to be found. Much of Malaysia is still covered in dense jungle, hiding many good rock climbing sites.

The most popular climbing sites are still near or around Kuala Lumpur and Selangor state, namely the famous Batu Caves and Bukit Takun to the city's north. Huge potential lies further north and east, in the states of Perak (around the scenic limestones of Ipoh and beyond), Perlis, Kelantan and Pahang where hundreds of limestone crags await exploration. With a few well known exceptions such as Gunung Kinabalu in Sabah and Gunung Mulu in Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo offers enormous untapped opportunities for rock climbing.

Most of the known climbing routes in Malaysia are bolted sport climbs on limestone crags, with some trad exceptions on granite walls. Mostly the French grading system is used here.



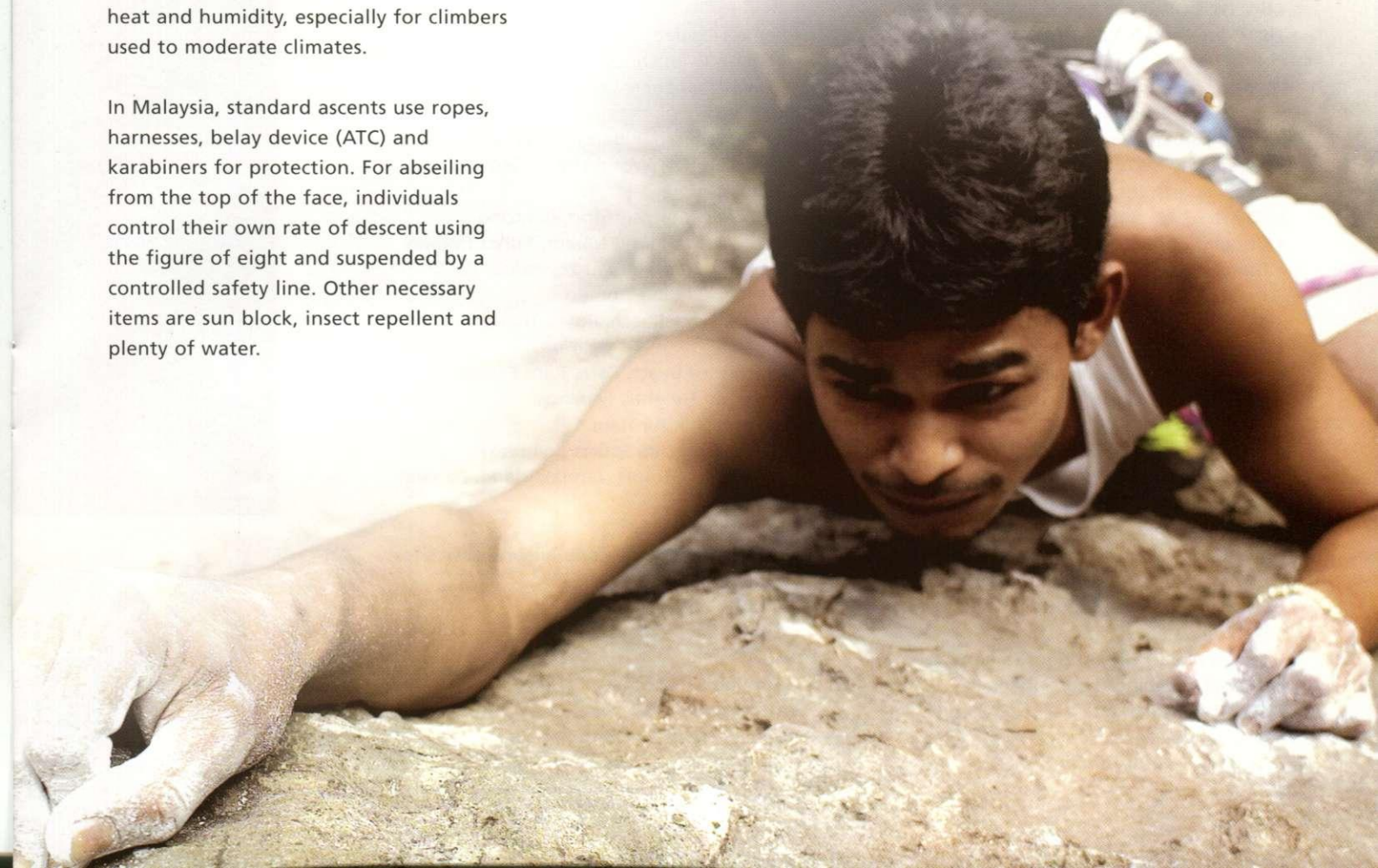
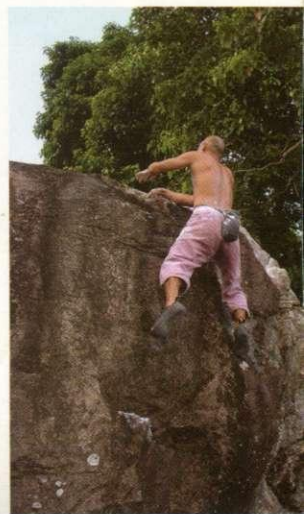
Indoor climbing gyms are increasingly popular, either at government youth and sports complex facilities or private operators.

WEATHER AND EQUIPMENT

The tropical weather is hot and humid all year long, making climbing possible anytime of year. While the normal monsoon season especially on the Peninsula's East Coast is from December to February, rains elsewhere are less predictable and in any case usually fall later in the day. Rock faces, especially limestone, dry fairly quickly even after torrential storms. Do beware of the high heat and humidity, especially for climbers used to moderate climates.

In Malaysia, standard ascents use ropes, harnesses, belay device (ATC) and karabiners for protection. For abseiling from the top of the face, individuals control their own rate of descent using the figure of eight and suspended by a controlled safety line. Other necessary items are sun block, insect repellent and plenty of water.

As many sites involve some trekking beforehand, wear light attire and good hiking shoes. Bring a change of clothes in case it rains. There are also local tour operators for rock climbing expeditions.





LIST OF POPULAR ROCK SITES AND INDOOR CLIMBING GYMS

JOHOR

- Air Papan Beach, Mersing
- Pulau Pemanggil, off Mersing coast
- Danga Bay Recreational Park, Johor Bahru
- Johor Sports Complex, Larkin, Johor Bahru

KEDAH

- Gunung Kerbau, Alor Setar
- Gunung Keriang, Alor Setar
- Jabatan Belia Dan Sukan (JBS Sports Complex), Alor Setar

KELANTAN

- Cattle Ranch, Gua Musang
- Ethnobotanic Garden (Taman Etnobotani), Gua Musang

KUALA LUMPUR AND SELANGOR

- Batu Caves, Selangor
- Bukit Takun, Templer Park, Selangor
- Delta Rover, Kepong
- International Youth Centre, Cheras
- Kramat Valley, Kuala Lumpur
- Pusat Belia Dan Sukan Kampung Pandan
- Boulderwall SS3, Kuala Lumpur
- Taman Melati Fire Station, Taman Melati
- Summit Climbing Gym, Subang Jaya

NEGERI SEMBILAN

- Gemas Rock Face, Gemas
- Kampung Keru, Tampin

- Taman Conlee, Tampin
- Tebong Palm Oil Estate, Tampin
- Kuala Pilah Sport Center, Kuala Pilah

PAHANG

- Teluk Cempedak Beach, Kuantan
- Floor 2B, First World Hotel, Genting Highlands Resort.
- Petronas Highway Stop, Bentong
- Dragon, Kampung Mukut, Pulau Tioman
- Genting Beach, Pulau Tioman
- Kg Juara, Pulau Tioman
- Nazri's Place Beach, Pulau Tioman

PENANG

- In front of Beach Cafe, Batu Feringghi
- Jesselton Heights, Penang
- Penang Hill, Air Itam
- JBS Penang (JBS Sports Complex)
- Jerejak Spa Resort, Jerejak Island, Penang

PERAK

- Gua Cheroh, Ipoh
- Various other limestone hill and cave sites around Ipoh

PERLIS

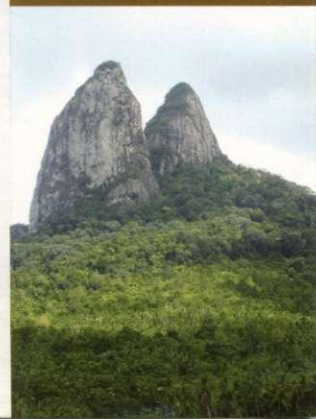
- Gua Kelam, Padang Besar

SABAH

- Gunung Kinabalu

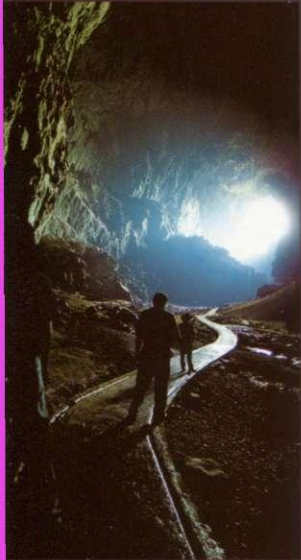
SARAWAK

- Batman Wall, Kuching-Bau
- Gunung Mulu / Mulu Caves, Miri





Cave Exploration



CAVE EXPLORATION

Caving or spelunking enjoys a good following in Malaysia. The country is endowed with vast numbers of limestone caves, including a World Heritage Site. They are home to amazing wildlife such as fruit bats, birds with edible nests or attractive stalagmites and stalactites

Many are surrounded in mystery and legends. Archeological research has found evidence of early man in many of these cave sites.

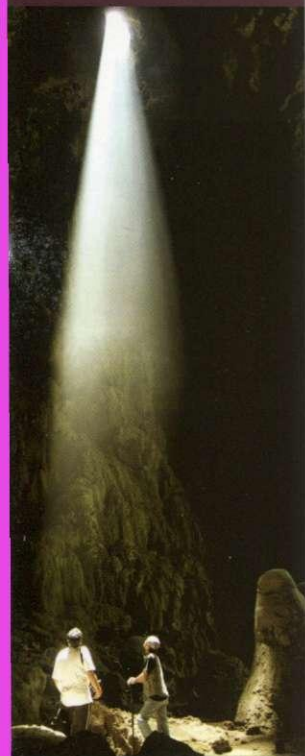
Although major expeditions have been carried, many caves are still not fully explored and remain an alluring adventure for the nature explorer. Repeat visitors marvel at how a cave can change within months as the naturally wet Malaysian weather promotes faster stalagmite and stalactite formation.

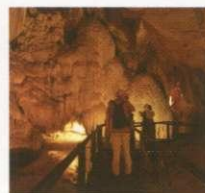
Caves come in various levels of accessibility. Some caves even have walkways to ease your touring, while others require visitors to rough it out and crawl on all fours.

CAVES OF MALAYSIA

In the Malay language, cave is 'gua', with the majority being limestone and are above ground level. In the Peninsula, the list features Gua Kelam in Perlis, Gua Tempurung and Kundu in Perak, scattered historic caves around Lake Kenyir in Terengganu and Gua Ikan in Kuala Krai, Kelantan. Famous caves in Sarawak include Niah and Mulu, and Fairy Cave at Bau. Gua Gomantong is the most well known cave in Sabah, where bird's nests are collected.

Underwater or river caves can be found in the Kinta Valley, making up less than ten





per cent of local caves - and are to be avoided during rainy periods. There are also dolomite and sandstone caves scattered around the country.

Caves can be divided into two categories: adventure and show caves. Adventure caves such as Drunken Forest Cave and Legan's Cave in Gunung Api, Sarawak remain close to their natural state. Show caves such as Deer, Lang and Clear Water Caves in Mulu National Park are those that are equipped for public visit, with lights as well as clearly marked paths and explanatory notes.

CAVE ATTRACTIONS

Malaysian caves are home to many exotic creatures. Notable are the blind catfish of Loagan's Cave and the Trapdoor Spider of Batu Caves.

LIST OF MALAYSIAN CAVES

- Gua Kelam, Perlis
- Gua Tempurung, Kampar, Perak
- Gua Kundu, Gopeng, Perak
- Gua Harimau, Perak
- Batu Caves, Selangor
- Gua Ikan, Kuala Krai, Kelantan
- Gua Taat, Gua Bewah at Tasik Kenyir, Terengganu
- Gua Telinga, Gua Daun Menari, Gua Luas, Taman Negara, Pahang
- Gua Gomantong, Sandakan, Sabah
- Fairy Cave, Wind Cave, Jambusan Cave, Bau, Sarawak
- Great Cave, Painted Cave, Niah National Park, Sarawak
- Sarawak Chamber, Deer Cave, Green Cave, Clear Water Cave, Moon Cave, Turtle Cave, Mulu National Park, Sarawak
- Gua Madai, Lahad Datu, Sabah



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Tingkat 1, Sinsuran Complex
Peti Surat 10626
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Sabah, Malaysia
Tel : 6088 211 881 / 212 719
Fax : 6088 211 585
Email: sabahparks@sabah.gov.my
www.sabahparks.org.my



Gua Gomantong near Sandakan, Sabah houses thousands of swifts in the two large caverns, producing birds' nests, an exotic Chinese delicacy.

The skeleton of a big cat fossilised in the roof of Gua Harimau in Kinta Valley makes an intriguing sight. Perak is also famous for its cave temples, the most well known are Perak Tong and Sam Poh Tong which contain many Buddha statues and religious cave murals. The Hindu cave temple in Batu Caves have shrines to the Hindu deities and is the site for the colourful religious festival of Thaipusam.

The Painted Cave in Gua Niah in Sarawak has walls displaying unique prehistoric paintings including boats that point to early man's local civilization. Its chambers have hundreds of fascinating formations.

The Mulu Caves in Sarawak has some of the biggest and longest networks of caves in the world. Although 195 kilometres of cave passages have already been surveyed, these represent just 30% of the estimated total. Here the Sarawak Chamber, 600m by 415m and 80m high, is the largest known cave chamber in the world. The Deer Cave measuring 120 to 150 metres in diameter is

the world's largest cave passage and at 108 km, Clearwater Cave is the longest cave in Asia. An estimated four million bats live in this cave system.

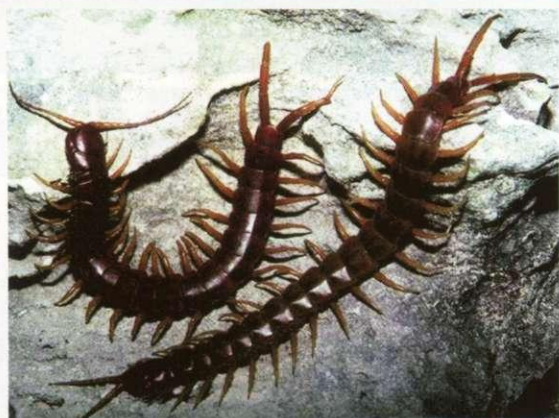
GOING CAVING

There are seasoned cavers who will be willing to act as guides. They may be contacted through the Malaysian Nature Society and adventure clubs or operators.

Most caving expeditions can be day trips although a visitor can choose to stay overnight. No overnight camping is allowed within most caves but room accommodation is usually available around most cave districts.

Caving is normally done in the relatively dry season from March to October, but be prepared for rain anytime. Permits may be required when exploring some caves. These

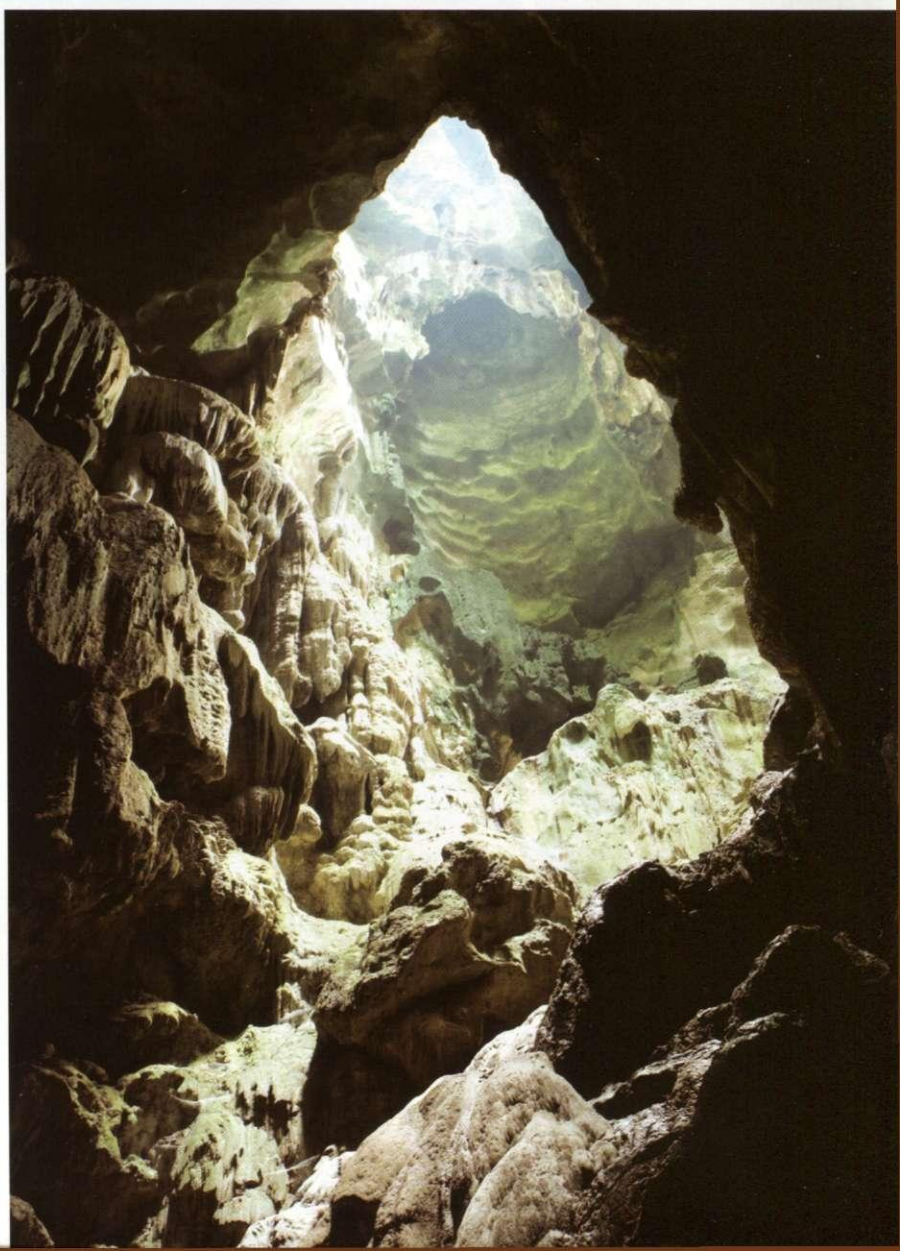




are available from the respective state forestry departments and cost from RM10 to RM40.

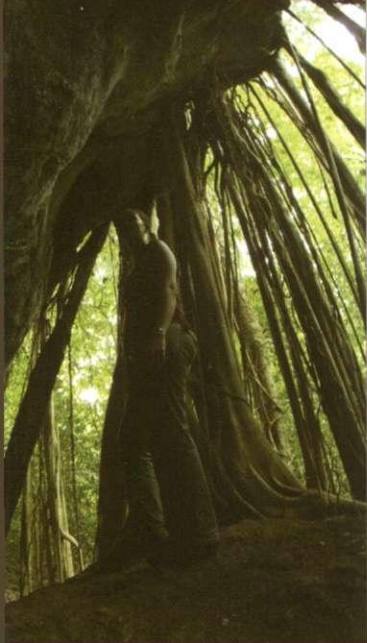
Tropical caves are not as damp as those in Europe and the Americas but they are chilly at times especially during storms and heavy rain. A light jacket is recommended.

As with all nature adventures, conservation of stalagmites, stalactites and all cave wildlife are of utmost importance. In caves with known inhabitants, avoid flash photography as the light frightens the cave-dwelling life forms. Note the possibility of encountering potentially dangerous creatures around caves such as snakes or scorpions.



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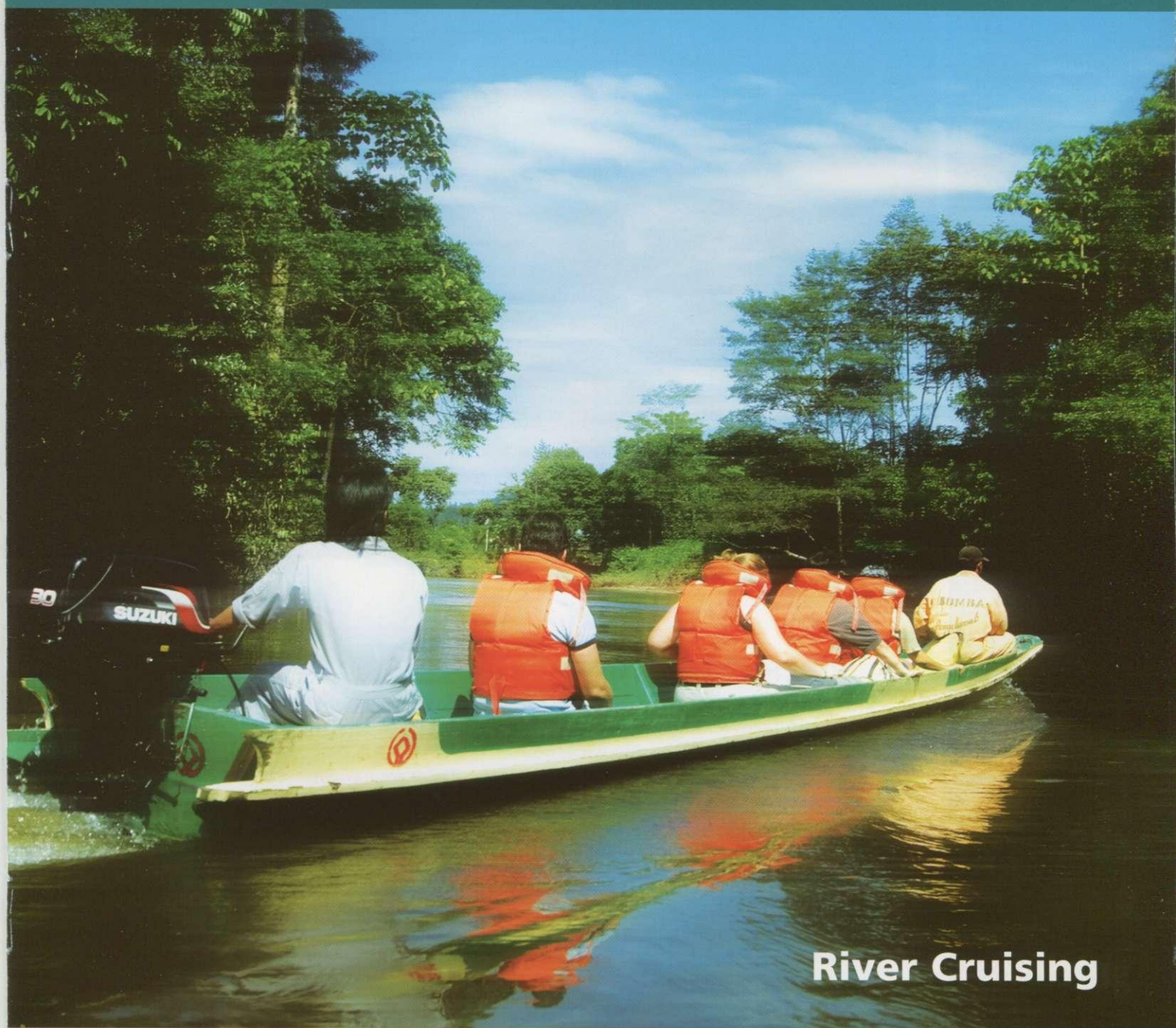
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Sarawak Forestry Department
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Regional Forest Office
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CAVING - PRACTICAL TIPS

- Always take a reliable guide, who can be hired from the National Parks or from caving clubs. Many of Malaysia's caves are unmapped and not even an experienced caver should go exploring alone. Groups of four are optimum.
- Although some operators offer cave diving, it is a highly specialized sport and should only be undertaken by professional divers and cavers.
- Always check equipment before venturing into a cave especially when abseiling.
- Experienced cavers recommend a maximum of eight hours in a cave at a stretch but most caves take less than three hours to explore.
- Plan how much lighting you will need. One kilogram of carbide will give enough illumination for approximately six to eight hours.
- Cavers should always carry back-up torches and extra batteries.
- Heart patients and those suffering from claustrophobia should limit themselves to show caves where guides take in groups of 20 to 40 people. Cavers should be free from allergies related to limestone and bat guano.





River Cruising



RIVER CRUISING

For nature lovers who wish to experience wildlife adventure as an alternative to trekking, river cruising is the perfect choice. In Malaysia, there are many rivers and mangrove areas where wildlife viewing is possible from the water. Riverine and mangrove habitats are home to large amounts of indigenous flora and fauna; and by nature many animals are drawn to water sources for drinking and cooling.

Whether for serious exploring or just a leisurely outing, a river cruise is an escape to another world. Glide beneath large overhanging trees with the rustle of animals, the call of birds and look out for creatures below the surface. Be rewarded with scenic hill views or spectacular limestone formations on the way, and end the cruise at a waterside stop for a meal amidst the splendour of nature.

WILDLIFE CRUISING AROUND MALAYSIA

There are navigable rivers in all parts of Malaysia as well as swampy mangroves along much of the coasts. The most suitable for wildlife exploration are those with calmer waters where the observer can look out patiently with binoculars and cameras ready. Cruises can be early in the day, mid-evening or night depending on the type of fauna targetted for viewing.

'Sungai' is the Malaysian word for river, and among the more established sites for cruising are Sungai Kilim on Langkawi Island where tree crabs, iguanas and macaques are seen among the trees and mangroves. A thrilling highlight is experiencing the eagles that swoop down on the feed thrown into the water. Sungai Selangor, just two hours from Kuala





Lumpur is famous for its firefly colonies that flicker together like festival lights. A similar fireflies cruise is found in the Santubong area in Sarawak and Kampung Ibok in Terengganu.

In Sarawak, there are also riverine or coastal cruises outside Kuching to watch the crocodiles along the riverbanks or a little further out of the estuaries to see dolphins. Borneo, with its dense jungles and sparser population, is home to an amazing variety of wildlife. River cruising on the Kinabatangan in Sabah, one of the longest rivers in Borneo offers some of the best opportunities to observe Bornean

fauna. Of specific interest is the rich primate family; this is one of only two areas in Asia with 10 primate species. These include those endemic to Borneo such as the proboscis monkey, maroon langur and the Bornean gibbon.

The Sukau river village area is located on the boundary of an important protected area in Sabah, the Kinabatangan Wildlife Sanctuary.





As a protected wetland site in Sabah, Kinabatangan is a conservation area for species such as the orang utan, the Borneo elephant and other wetlands animals including Storm's stork and the flat-headed wild cat.

RIVER CRUISING TIPS

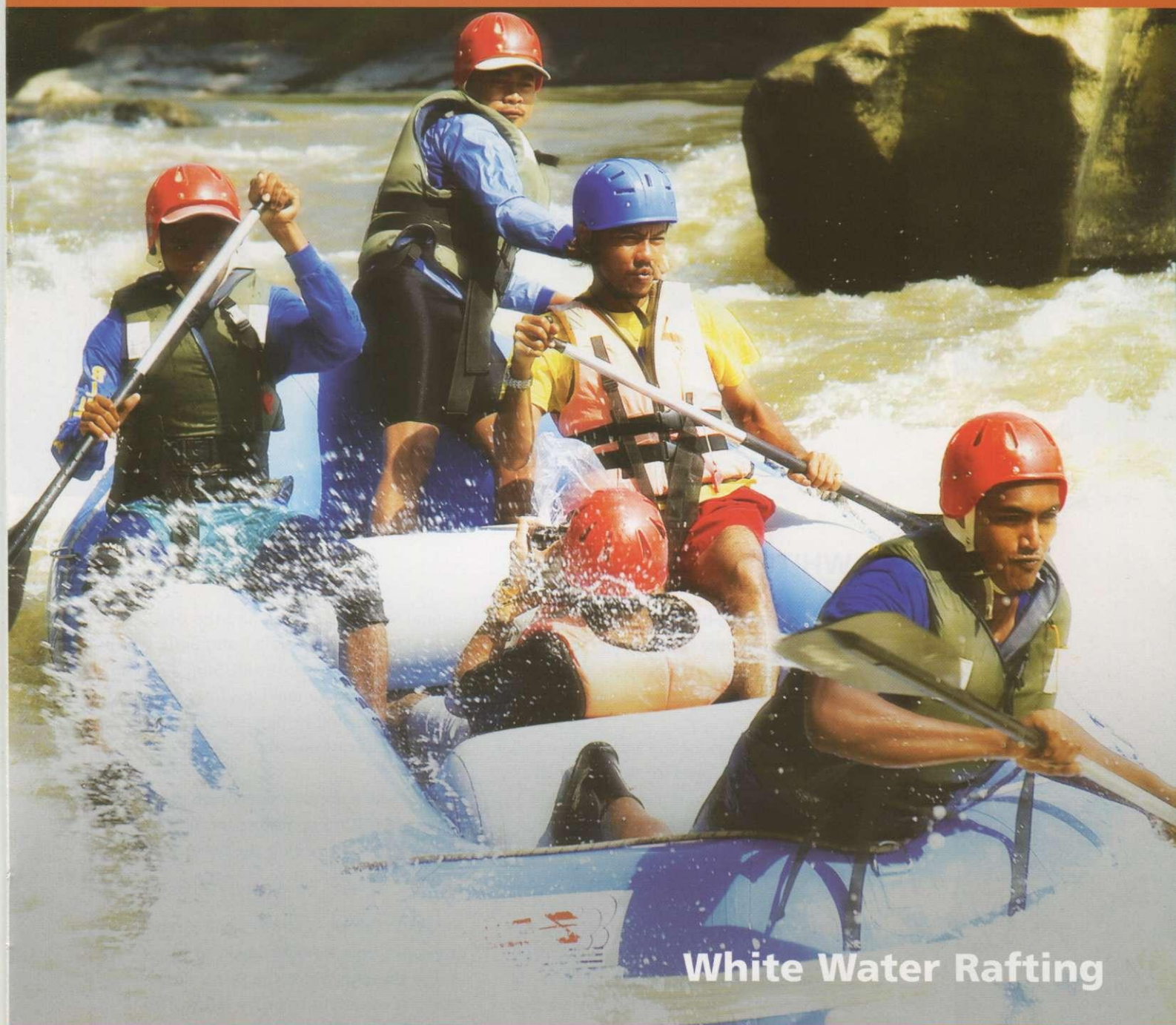
Some river cruise boats have canopies while some don't in order to afford unobstructed views, especially if you are hiring a local boat on your own. Bring along sun cream or a brimmed hat against the sun for the journey to and fro or in case shade trees are few. Binoculars are most handy and zoom cameras will afford the sharpest photos. Insect repellent is useful for evening and night tours.

Cruises at estuaries or coasts depend on the tides. For example, crocodiles are easier to see at low tides when the mud banks are exposed. Check with the operator for exact departure times for your preferred cruise.

Observing wildlife needs patience, a keen eye, common sense, good timing and luck. Monkeys, crocodiles, dolphins, fireflies and so on are wild creatures, therefore sightings are unpredictable. Hiring a knowledgeable guide will increase your chances of seeing what the lesser trained eye might miss, since tropical animals are masters at camouflage.

Lastly, river cruises are rarely done in the heat of mid-day, as it gets too hot for both human and other wildlife!





White Water Rafting



WHITE WATER RAFTING

Rivers have long been the life blood of the indigenous people of Malaysia. They have served as a means of transport, a source of food and now, a resource for eco-tourism.

The native groups of the Malaysian interior have been using rafts for thousands of years, but white water rafting has only been popularised since the 1980s.

WHITE WATER RAFTING SITES

Sabah has two main rivers for rafting, the Padas and Kiulu rivers which are certified as Grade 3 and Grade 2 respectively in the international white water rafting grading system. Under normal weather conditions the two rivers are relatively constant in depth and speed. However, heavy rains can cause them to swell into Grade 4 rivers. During this time rafting activities may be called off temporarily.

Peninsula Malaysia has its share of good rafting sites. These include the Grade 2

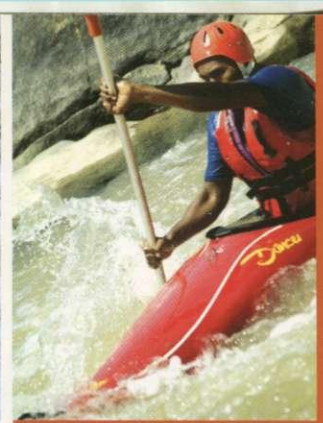
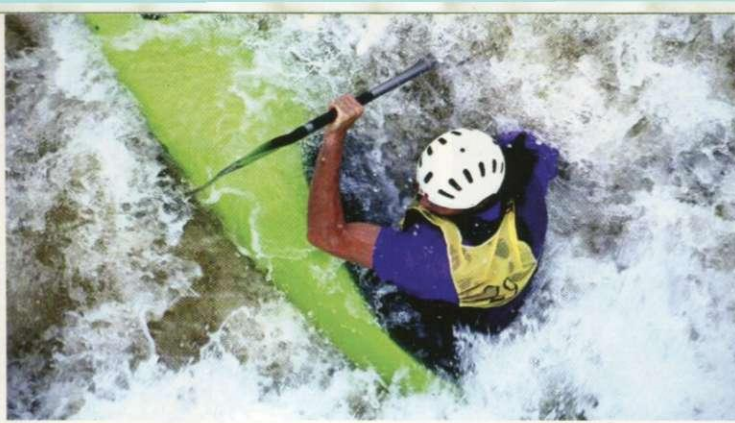
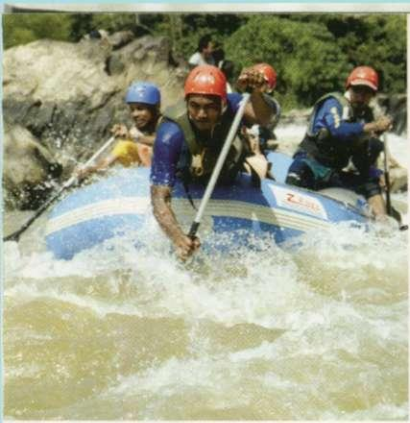
Sungai Sungkai in Perak and the Grade 3 Sungai Selangor in Kuala Kubu Baru, which has its source in Fraser's Hill. Sungai Endau, Jeram Besu and Sungai Lipis in Pahang and Sungai Tembeling in Taman Negara are also popular rafting sites.

As it is now a popular adventure sport, there are rafting operators for all the popular sites, providing the necessary equipment.

In Sabah, rafting operators will arrange transport from Kota Kinabalu to Padas Gorge through which the Padas River flows. A novelty is to go by railway from Pangi Railway Station, where an antique train will take you on a scenic journey through the Padas Gorge. Then comes the thrill of riding rapids with names like the Headhunter, Adrenaline Flow and Merry-Go-Round.

Kiulu River is closer to Kota Kinabalu but is less gut-wrenching. Successful rafters at





Padas will be presented with a certificate of accomplishment upon finishing their adventures.

Peninsular Malaysia's rafting sites are easily accessible by car or bus. The Selangor River is reached via Kuala Kubu Bharu town, about 90 km from Kuala Lumpur. A single rafting trip on the Selangor River will take approximately half a day.

The Telom River in Cameron Highlands and the Tembeling River in Taman Negara, Pahang are approximately four hours from Kuala Lumpur. More time is needed to raft the Grade 5 Telom River in Pahang as it is a much more challenging site.

Changing rooms, toilets, showers or camp sites are available in or near most rafting sites. Some operators also offer kayaking courses and a white water rescue module.

RAFTING PREPARATIONS

The best time to raft is after rains when the water level has risen and there are some good rapids. However, the dry season is a good time for rafting novices to get acquainted with the sport without having to fight the currents. Smaller rafts may be used in the dry season. In Sabah, only the Padas River is recommended during dry months as the water level is too low for rafting on the Kiulu River.

The rafting expeditions usually take between 45 minutes to two hours depending on the water level.

Operators will ensure that each group is always accompanied by two professional, certified rafters. A minimum of three persons is needed to stabilize a raft.



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PRACTICAL RAFTING TIPS

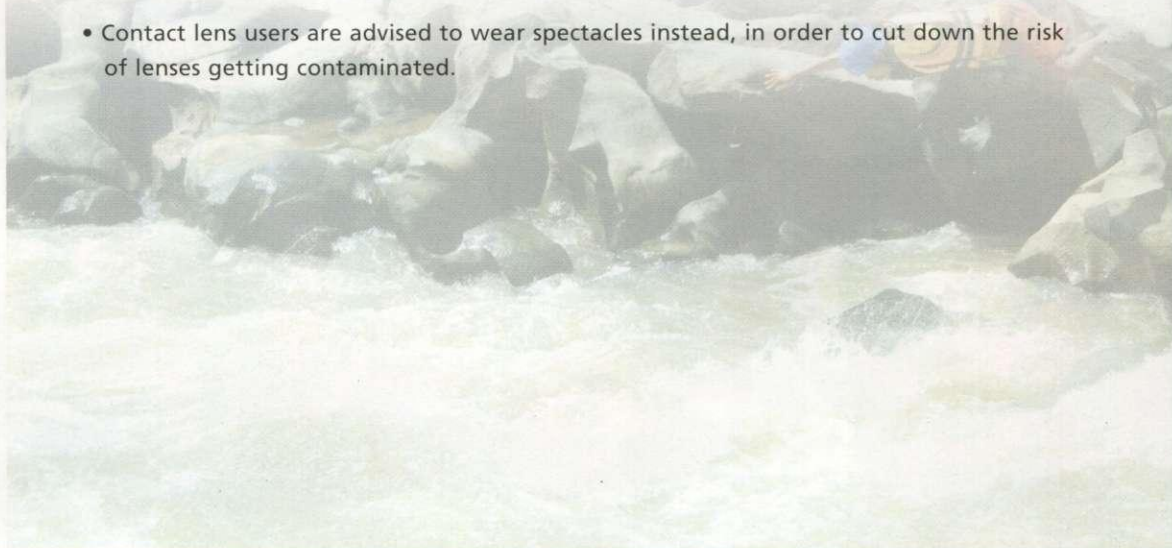
All rafters will be given a safety briefing before the ride and will be shown paddle-handling, basic backward and forward paddling techniques and other safety precautions.

Paddles, life jackets, safety helmets, life-lines, first aid kits and rescue bags are provided by the operator. The rafter only needs comfortable clothing which does not hinder movement.

Always check that the helmets and life jackets provided fit you well and are not too tight or too loose. If you have over-turned close to the river bank, don't use your raft paddle, as you may hit someone else. Never attempt to use the paddle as a lever against rocks as you risk getting hit by it.

ADDITIONAL POINTS:

- Bring a change of clothes. A warm-up jacket is also a good idea.
- Wear secure, well-fitting shoes or diving booties
- Jewellery which cannot be secured firmly should not be worn while rafting.
- Those wearing glasses should use an elastic sports holder to anchor their spectacles.
- Contact lens users are advised to wear spectacles instead, in order to cut down the risk of lenses getting contaminated.





Four Wheel Drive Expeditions



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FOUR WHEEL DRIVE EXPEDITIONS

Malaysia's rugged undulating terrain, dense rain forests crossed by rapid rivers make it an irresistible destination for four wheel drive or 4WD expeditions. The heat, mud, rolling hills and rainstorms add to the challenge in the gruelling yet exhilarating off-road driving.

With over half the country still under jungle cover, Malaysia's natural landscape brings out the best of man and machine in a test of skill and endurance. Yet there are sweet rewards, with stunning vistas to behold or a quiet stop to view the wildlife and the waterfalls to cool off after an exhausting run.

International 4X4 or off-road events held in Malaysia annually are usually around October and November. Among them are the Borneo Safari, the National Challenge and the Rainforest International Challenge of Malaysia.

The novice or casual visitor may not be cut out for the rigours of world class events like the year-end Camel Trophy or the Rainforest Challenge, two of the world of 4WD's most competitive events. However, there is nothing to stop an interested

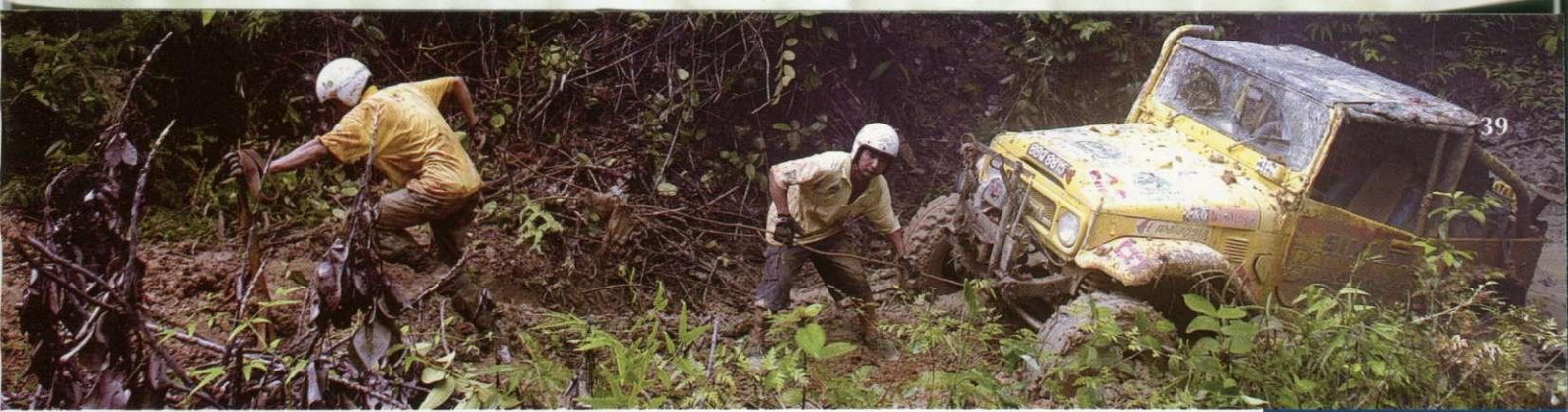
amateur from trying out off-road driving and having an exciting time exploring places off the beaten track, especially in a conducive environment like Malaysia's.

MALAYSIAN EXPEDITION ROUTES

Peninsular Malaysia's East Coast offers some of the best terrain for off-road enthusiasts. The forests around Gua Musang in Kelantan; Tasik Kenyir, Sungai Loh and Sungai Kelamin in Terengganu; Endau Rompin in Johor; Tasik Chini and Cameron Highlands in Pahang are established routes for this adventure sport.

Closer to Kuala Lumpur, the most notable is Pertak in Kuala Kubu Bharu, Selangor which is just two hours drive from the city. The route is scenic with plantations and fresh fruit stalls lining the approach road. South of Kuala Lumpur, the forests around Kuala Klawang in Negeri Sembilan offer waterfall attractions such as Lata Kijang and visits to Aboriginal settlements.

Pahang and Terengganu are the acclaimed 4WD destinations. The Sungai Lembing mines in Pahang are a tested though challenging site and anglers may like to



pack their rods for some fishing as well. Endau Rompin, a National Park area in Johor is a more trying route. A well-prepared group expedition is strongly recommended since a lone vehicle may encounter difficulties.

Further afield in East Malaysia, the areas around the Kinabalu National Park in Sabah and Bintulu in Sarawak are sites for off-road driving.

While the jungle routes themselves may be gruelling, most sites are approached from small town areas where provisions and fuel can be obtained.

OFF-ROAD DRIVING SEASON

Off-road driving is a year round activity, but depending on the level of expertise of participants, some months are better than others. The relatively drier season from March to October make for firmer terrain and less mud as trails may become severe if it rains. Storms, landslides and floods may also change the tracks and make them impassable or inaccessible.

For the East Coast, take note of the December - February monsoon rains.

There are local adventure operators offering four wheel drive expeditions, designed to suit visitors' experience and time constraints. Drivers, food, and camping equipment can be included in the package. Campsites are usually situated near a waterfall or river, a superb environment for bathing and swimming.

Although visitors can rent 4WD vehicles on their own, it is not advisable to venture into the wilderness without a guide and





partners as the terrain is difficult to negotiate without the benefit of experience. Some operators also offer 4WD road training courses with a certificate upon completion.

Due to the rugged terrain and the challenges for individuals and groups in case of breakdowns or getting stuck in mud, participants need to be of sound body and mind.

Nevertheless, easier routes can be selected for family outings, corporate team-building or youth leadership programs. Although it can be an extreme sport, operators and enthusiasts are aware of the need to minimise danger to the environment.



PRACTICAL POINTERS FOR 4WD ADVENTURES

- Wear light but absorbent natural fiber clothing
- Nights in the rainforests may get cooler than expected so bring along a water-proof jacket to keep you warm, as well as protection from the rain
- Sturdy shoes are a must especially in competition events. Bring a pair of thongs or sneakers to let your feet breathe and relax when you make camp
- Socks are a must to keep your feet dry and unchaffed. A pair of heavy duty gloves can come in very handy.
- For overnight camping, bring a sleeping bag and a camping tent.
- Always check vehicles before starting out on a drive. Pay special attention to tyres, which can develop punctures from the rough terrain.
- Carry a first aid kit with elastic bandages, surgical dressing, antiseptic, burn cream, eye drops, scissors, and tweezers.





Mountain Biking



MOUNTAIN BIKING

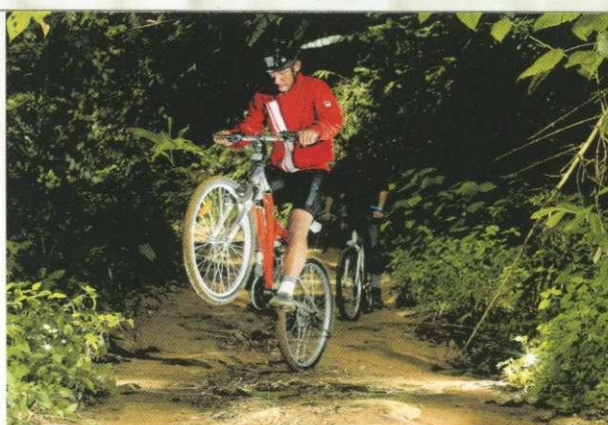
The exhilaration of speed using solely human power on a machine, and on a raw trail amidst open nature, can only be achieved by mountain biking. With its innumerable jungle and rural trails all over the country, Malaysia is truly a mountain bikers' paradise.

Mountain biking has long been a popular sport in Malaysia, with its own legendary trails and stories. It is said that ever since bicycles were introduced into the land, the inland villagers who embraced it were the first mountain bikers - having to traverse the challenging trails to and from their remote settlements. Today the challenge is still there, but it is one of adventure and discovery.

BIKING SITES IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia has both road and off-road biking routes.

There are many cycle-friendly road routes around Malaysia, where traffic is less heavy on the rural roads and the views stupendous. Around Kuala Lumpur, these routes are the old Gombak Road, Ulu Yam interior routes and to the south, the Ulu Langat interior via Cheras or Ampang. Beyond Kuala Lumpur there are the rolling hill roads around Seri Menanti and Kuala Pilah in Negeri Sembilan, as well as numerous East Coast routes with Sungai Lembing as an accessible site from Kuantan city.



As for Sabah and Sarawak, most rural road areas are scenic and near untouched, providing ideal routes for adventure biking.

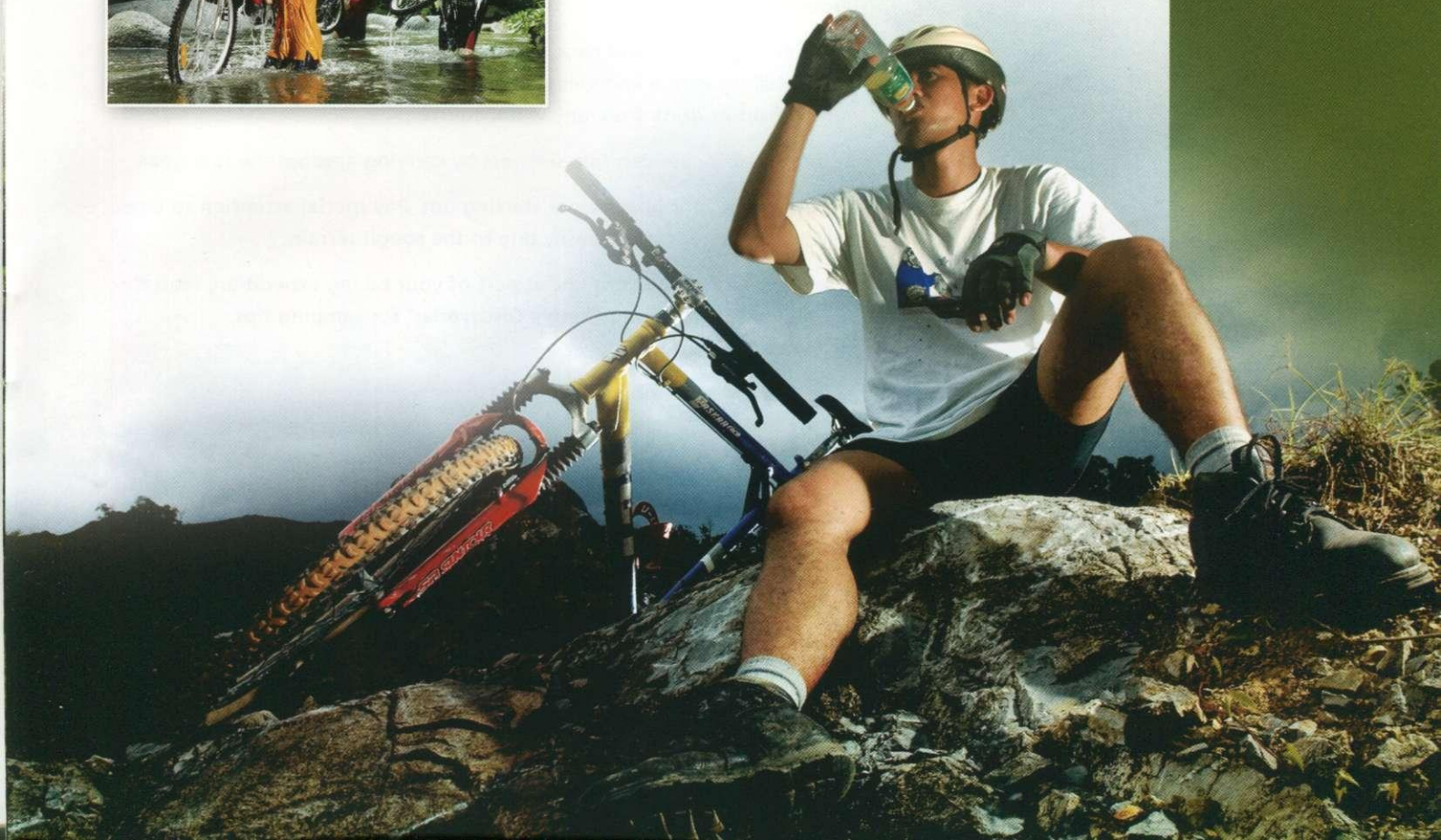
But for the hardened enthusiasts, it's the challenging off-road sites that count. In Kuala Lumpur, the 'urban legend' route is the Bukit Kiara jungle trail for its accessibility and easy opportunity of meeting friendly fellow aficionados.



Around Kuala Lumpur, there are the Batu Dam, Kampung Pusu and the Hulu Gombak Forest Reserve with its water catchment areas.

Further afield, there is the popular Sungai Dua site near Karak in Pahang. This is a strenuous 40 km trail that reaches into the Lentang Forest Reserve. As in many routes in Malaysia, this trail leads to a nice river or even waterfall - in this case the impressive 30m-high Kerau waterfall located at its end. As with this site, a notable feature of most of these rainforest sites is the numerous stream crossings.

Many Recreational Forest Reserves in Malaysia can be off-road cycle sites. Check with the local authorities for conditions.



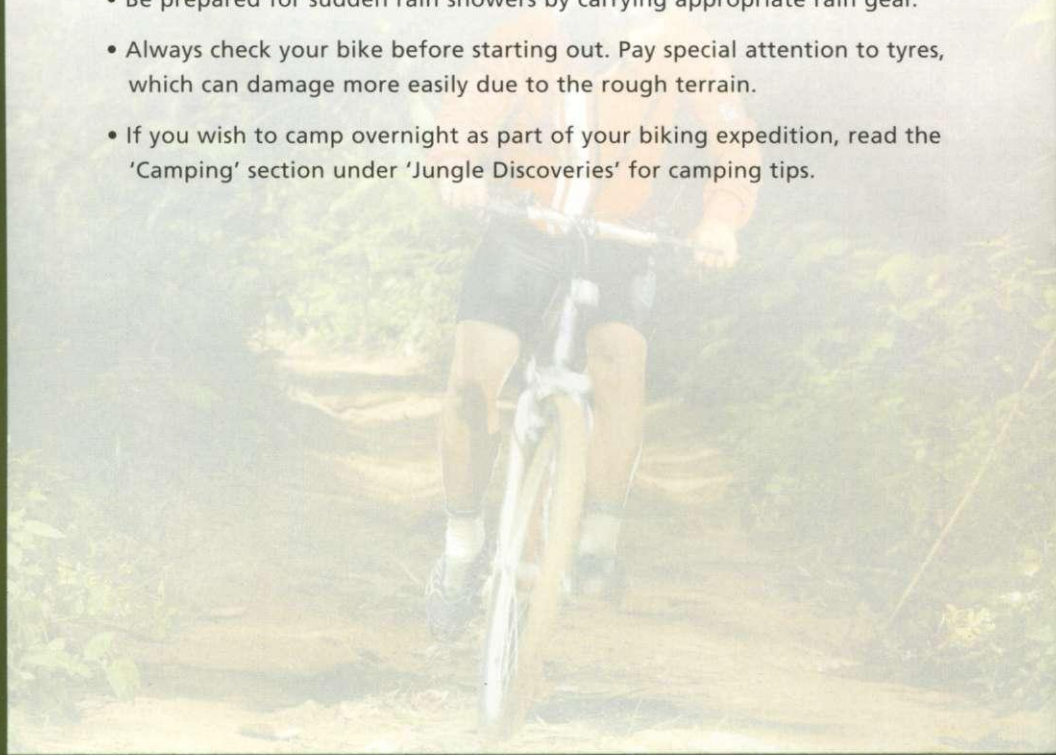


MOUNTAIN BIKING TIPS

- Find out about the trail and surroundings, be sure that you have enough time to complete the entire route before darkness falls. Do not stray off the path. A compass would be handy, just in case.
- Use good judgment regarding the fitness level required for the trail, and know your physical limits.
- Always let someone know of your plans and destination for the day, especially if going alone.
- Bring enough water and pack some light snacks to keep energy level up. Unless biking with a knowledgeable partner, it is not advisable to eat jungle fruit or drink from any water source.
- Be prepared for sudden rain showers by carrying appropriate rain gear.
- Always check your bike before starting out. Pay special attention to tyres, which can damage more easily due to the rough terrain.
- If you wish to camp overnight as part of your biking expedition, read the 'Camping' section under 'Jungle Discoveries' for camping tips.

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Bird Watching



BIRD WATCHING

From muddy mangroves to misty mountain ranges, Malaysia's diverse tropical landscape teems with hundreds of resident bird species. The country's location on the Australasian cross-migratory paths also makes it a host to 120 or so migratory birds. All in all with over 600 species to be seen in the Peninsula and about 580 species in Malaysian Borneo, Malaysia has emerged as a bird watching haven.

Well over half of Malaysia's land mass is covered in rainforest environments or at least plantations. With the diversity of habitats, there are many places having abundant bird life to choose from. As the various bird-watching and nature sites around the country are easily accessible, it is easy to understand why bird-lovers are drawn to Malaysia.



AVIAN HABITATS

Many birds are common to both Peninsula Malaysia and Sabah and Sarawak but some species, known as endemics, are unique to a certain location, such as the Malayan Whistling Thrush in the Peninsula. On Borneo there are over 30 endemics including the Borneo Blue Flycatcher and Yellow-rumped Flowerpecker in Sabah.

The Malaysian rainforests can be generally divided into three distinctive habitat types - coastal mangroves, lowland rainforests and montane or mountain forests.

Swampy mangrove forest ecosystems where salt and freshwater environs meet on the coastline fringe are home to birds such as the Common Kingfisher. Lowland rainforests, including freshwater swamp,



peat and hill dipterocarp forests, remain the most extensive habitat for over 200 birds and are crucial to Storm's Stork and Green Imperial Pigeon.

Mountain forests generally occur above an elevation of 900 metres, where species such as the Mountain Peacock-Pheasant and Mountain Blackeye thrive in the cool damp climates and stunted trees of these high altitude regions.

While each habitat provides an excellent concentrated birding experience, in Malaysia it is not difficult to visit several sites in different ecological zones to enjoy the variation in birdlife.

POPULAR BIRDING SITES

With the increase in nature and environmental awareness, more and more sites have been identified where birds can be observed and there are also bird sanctuaries designated around the country.

For the serious enthusiast, a comprehensive itinerary spanning the Peninsular and Borneo could include: Kuala Selangor, Fraser's Hill, Taman Negara, Bako National

Park in Sarawak, Kinabalu Park and Danum Valley in Sabah.

For beginners or those who are limited to around Kuala Lumpur, there are several excellent bird watching sites within a few hours drive from the city. One new area that has made a name for itself in birding circles is Putrajaya Wetlands, a human-enhanced wetland environment that has begun to attract both birds and bird-watchers, less than an hour south of Kuala Lumpur. For a pleasant day trip, check out the Kuala Selangor Nature Park, a mangrove swamp along the west coast that supports 130 bird species and some seasonal migrants including the rare Spoonbilled Sandpiper. Fraser's Hill and Cameron Highlands both offer lush green hill surroundings with panoramic views and hiking trails where bird life abounds.

Those with more time may want to travel further inland into Malaysia's premier national park, Taman Negara, where dense ancient lowland forests are home to over 300 bird species. Another popular site is Kuala Gula Bird Sanctuary on the Perak coast, where endangered Milky Storks congregate.





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Over in Borneo, the Kota Kinabalu City Bird Sanctuary, a feeding ground for many species of resident birds and several migratory species from Northern Asia is easily accessible from the capital of Sabah. Kinabalu Park, a World Heritage Site with its own endemics such as the Kinabalu Warbler, is just two hours away from the city. Many good birding sites can be found in Sarawak, such as Gunung Mulu National Park. Sarawak endemics can also be found, such as Hose's Broadbill in the Kelabit Highlands.

BIRD-WATCHING SEASON AND ADVISORY

Malaysia's tropical climate allows bird-watching to be a year-round activity. Take note of the rainy season when planning excursions and bring along rain gear or a poncho. Although these days somewhat unpredictable, in the West Coast of the Peninsula, rain usually falls heaviest from September to December. There is a distinct monsoon in the East Coast from December to February, while the rainy season occurs a bit earlier in the year in Borneo.

Migratory birds use Malaysia's west coast flyway to travel to Sumatra and beyond with peak movements in April and October.

As with all wildlife, all possible care and respect is to be given to the birds and their habitats. It is illegal not only to shoot or capture any bird in a gazetted bird sanctuary, but even to harass or disturb them. Trafficking in protected species is also prohibited under the Protection of Wild Life Act 1972 in Peninsula Malaysia, with separate acts enforced in Sabah and Sarawak. Entry permits from the Forestry Department of the various states may be needed at some bird sanctuaries. Bird

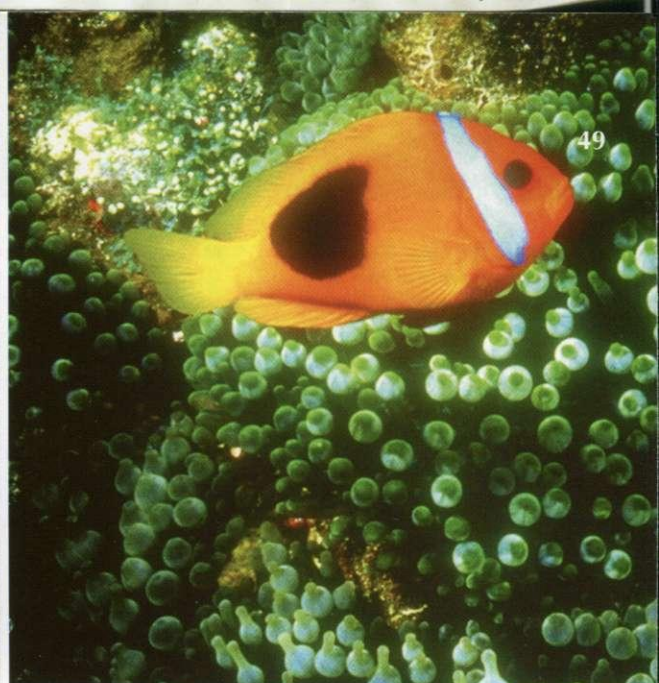
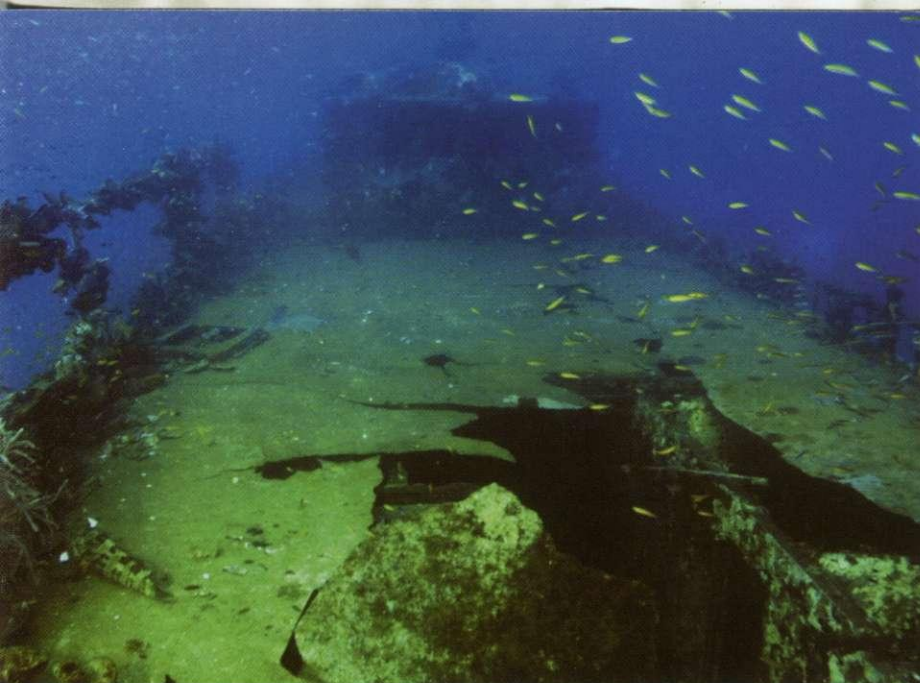
watchers are advised to check with their guides or tour agent.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR BIRD-WATCHERS

- Read or find out as much as you can about both the site and the bird species likely to be found in it before hand.
- A pair of binoculars helps to locate and identify distant and high flying birds.
- Most birds are active in the morning and late afternoon when the temperature is cooler. Consult your guide book as to the best times to spot a particular species.
- Many birds have regular feeding habits and patterns. A good place to watch for shorebirds is at mudflats during low tide.
- When photographing birds, use long range lenses and flash equipment as there may not be sufficient natural light.

BIRD WATCHING SITES

- Bukit Larut (Maxwell Hill), Perak, (Mountain forest)
- Kuala Gula Bird Sanctuary, Perak, (Mangrove forest)
- Kuala Selangor Nature Park, Selangor (Mangrove forest)
- Cameron Highlands, Pahang, (Mountain forest)
- Genting Highlands, Pahang, (Mountain forest)
- Taman Negara, Pahang, (Lowland rainforest)
- Fraser's Hill, Pahang, (Mountain forest)
- Kinabalu Park, Sabah, (Mountain forest)
- Kota Belud Bird Sanctuary, Sabah (Lowland rainforest)
- Danum Valley, Sabah, (Lowland rainforest)
- Bako National Park, Sarawak (Lowland rainforest)
- Gunung Mulu National Park, Sarawak (Mangrove forest)



WRECK DIVING

The warm sparkling seas around Malaysia are recognized as having some of the best diving spots. The tropical waters support an underwater ecosystem of magnificent coral reefs, diverse fish species, sea turtles, and giant clams.

Scuba diving to appreciate the rich marine environment is common, with outstanding dive sites such as Pulau Sipadan and Pulau Layang-layang in Sabah, as well as Pulau Tioman, Pulau Redang and the Perhentian islands on the Peninsula's East Coast. Wreck diving presents another facet to enjoy in Malaysian waters.

Pulau Labuan, just off the west coast of Sabah is a haven for wreck diving. The four wrecks around Labuan's waters, namely American, Australian, Blue Water, and Cement Wrecks are accessible to all, but internal exploration is best left to expert divers. In addition, barracuda, groupers and batfish are commonly sighted here.

Off the Sarawak coast, divers can engage in wreck diving at a World War II Japanese troop carrier, the Katori Maru.

On the Peninsula's East Coast, the seas off Lanjut in Johor offers two shipwreck

sites, including that of a World War II Japanese frigate, which can be found off Pulau Berhala.

Diving is not recommended during the monsoon months of November to January in the South China Sea.



Malaysia at a Glance

COUNTRY The Federation of Malaysia comprises of Peninsular Malaysia and the states of Sabah and Sarawak on the island of Borneo.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

Located between two and seven degrees north of the Equator, Peninsular Malaysia is separated from the states of Sabah and Sarawak by the South China Sea. To the north of Peninsular Malaysia is Thailand while its southern neighbour is Singapore. Sabah and Sarawak are bordered by Indonesia while Sarawak also shares a boundary with Brunei Darussalam.

AREA 329,758 sq km.

POPULATION 25 Million

CAPITAL Kuala Lumpur (KL)

PEOPLE Malays make up about 57% of the population and are the predominant group with Chinese, Indians and other ethnic groups making up the rest.

LANGUAGE Bahasa Melayu (Malay) is the national language but English is widely spoken. Malaysians also speak various languages and dialects.

RELIGION Islam is the official religion but all other religions are freely practised.

GOVERNMENT A parliamentary democracy with a bicameral legislative system, the Head of State is the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and the Head of Government is the Prime Minister.

CLIMATE Malaysia has a tropical climate and the weather is warm all year round. Temperatures range from 21°C to 32°C and the annual rainfall ranges from 2000mm to 2500mm.

HISTORY AND CULTURE Apart from the local Malays and the native groups, immigrants from China, India, Indonesia and other parts of the world have all contributed to the multiracial composition of its population. Its interesting cultural diversity can be largely attributed to the country's long and ongoing interaction with the outside world and colonial rule by the Portuguese, Dutch and the British. The evolution of the country into a cultural melting pot is evident in the unique blend of religions, socio-cultural activities, traditions, languages and food. The country achieved independence on August 31, 1957 as the Federation of Malaya and subsequently with the entry of Sabah and Sarawak in 1963, Malaysia was formed.

MAJOR HOLIDAYS • New Year's Day (January 1)* • Federal Territory Day (February 1)** • Chinese New Year (February 18 & 19)* • Labour Day (May 1)* • Wesak Day (May 1)* • King's Birthday (June 2)* • National Day (August 31)* • Hari Raya Aidilfitri (October 13 & 14)* • Deepavali (November 8)* • Christmas (December 25)
Note: (*)- national holidays • (**) - KL and Putrajaya only (#) except Sarawak & Labuan.

ECONOMIC PROFILE

Manufacturing constitutes the largest component of Malaysia's economy while tourism and primary commodities such as petroleum, palm oil, natural rubber and timber are major contributors to its economy.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Visitors must be in possession of a valid passport or travel document with a minimum validity of six months beyond the intended visiting period. Citizens of most countries do not require visas for social or business visits.

For further information, please visit or call the nearest Malaysian diplomatic mission or Tourism Malaysia office.

CURRENCY The unit of currency is the Malaysian Ringgit, which is indicated as RM. Foreign currencies can be converted at banks and money changers.

All travellers, both residents and non-residents, are required to complete the Traveller's Declaration Form (TDF). The revised TDF has two separate sections for residents and non-residents – the blue section for residents and the white section for non-residents.

Residents are only required to declare in detail the exact amount of ringgit carried when they enter or leave the country only if the amount is in excess of RM1,000. They are also required to declare in detail the exact amount in foreign currency, including travellers's cheque carried, when they leave the country only if the amount exceeds the equivalent of RM 10,000. Residents do not have to declare any amount of foreign currency, including traveller's cheques, carried with them when they re-enter the country. Non-residents are required to declare the exact amount of foreign currency carried when they enter or leave the country only if the amount exceeds the equivalent of USD 2,500.00.

Residents are required to keep the TDF in their passport when they

leave the country and surrender the TDF upon their return instead of the current practice of filling two separate TDF's when they leave and re-enter the country. Likewise, non-residents will continue with the current practice, which requires them to keep the TDF in their passport and surrender the TDF upon leaving the country.

BANKING HOURS

Most states:
Mon-Thu: 9.15 am – 4.30 pm
Fri: 9.15 am – 4.00 pm
Sat: 11.00 am – 2.00 pm
Sun: Closed • Kedah, Kelantan & Terengganu: Sun – Wed: 9.15 am – 4.30 pm • Thu: 9.15 am – 4.00 pm
• Fri: Closed

POST OFFICES Open from 8.00am to 5.00pm daily except on Sundays and public holidays. In Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu post offices are closed on Fridays and public holidays.

TIME Eight hours ahead of GMT and 16 hours ahead of U.S. Pacific Standard Time.

ELECTRICITY Voltage is 220 – 240 volts AC at 50Hz cycles per second.

MEASUREMENT SYSTEM Malaysia follows the metric system.

TELEPHONE Local calls can be made from public phones using coins or prepaid cards. International calls can be made from public phones with phone card facilities or at any Telekom offices.

GETTING THERE The main gateway to Malaysia is through the new K.L. International Airport at Sepang, which is located approximately 50 kilometres south of Kuala Lumpur. Other major international airports that serve as entry points are located in Penang, Kuching, Kota Kinabalu and Langkawi.

The main entry point by sea is at Port Klang, about 50 kilometres away from KL. Malaysia is also accessible by rail and road from

Singapore and Thailand. ABDA Worldwide Excess Baggage service offers deliveries at less than 50% of the normal airline excess baggage rate. For more information, Call: 603-7781 0564
Fax: 603- 7781 1300
E-mail: info@abda.com.my

GETTING AROUND Malaysia has excellent domestic air links and a well-developed and efficient public transportation system served by buses, taxis as well as trains.

ACCOMMODATION Malaysia has a wide range of accommodation with competitive rates. International standard, mid range and budget hotels, youth hostels and timeshare apartments are just some of the types of accommodation available.

DO'S & DON'TS When visiting Malaysia, the visitor should observe local customs and practices. Some common courtesies and customs are as follows:

- It is polite to call before visiting a home
- Shoes must always be removed when entering Malaysian homes.
- Drinks are generally offered to guests. It would be polite to accept.
- The right hand is always used when eating with one's hand when giving and receiving objects.
- The right forefinger is not used to point at places, objects or persons. Instead, the thumb of the right hand, with the four fingers folded under, is the preferred usage.
- Shoes must be removed when entering places of worship such as mosques and temples. Some mosques provides robes and scarves for female visitors and men in shorts.
- Taking photographs at places of worship is usually permitted but always ask for permission first.
- Toasting is not a common practice in Malaysia. The country's large Muslim population does not drink alcohol.



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E-mail : enquiries@tourism.gov.my
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e-Portal : www.virtualmalaysia.com

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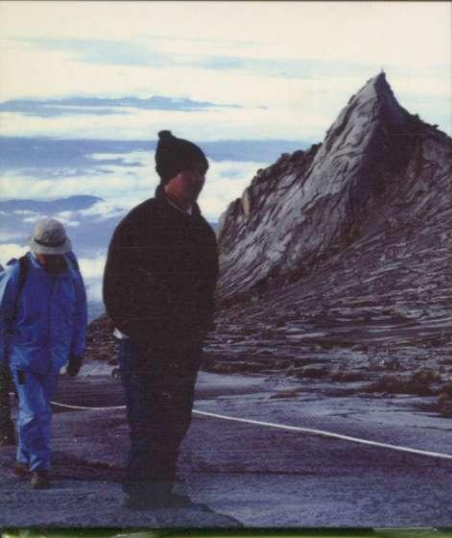
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Published by : Tourism Malaysia, Ministry of Tourism.

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AWN (English) / IH / DC
August 2007

(TRAFFICKING IN ILLEGAL DRUGS CARRIES THE DEATH PENALTY)

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